AYTAPKEIA,
OR THE
ART
OF DIVINE
CONTENTMENT

BY
THOMAS WATSON Pastour
of *Stephens Walbrook*, LONDON.

The fifth Edition.

Godlinesse with Contentment is great gain, 1 Tim. 6. 6.

Κέρδος μέγιστον χρὴ δοκεῖν ὄντα συμφορᾶς. Eurip.
Beatus est qui sibi contentus est. Seneca.

LONDON.
Printed by *E. M.* for *Ralph Smith* at the signe of the *Bible* in *Cornhil* neer the *Royal Exchange*. 1658.

April. 23. 1653.

Imprimatur,

EDM. CALAMY.

3989-90-79

THE EPISTLE To the Reader.

Christian Reader,

Having seriously considered the great dishonours done to Almighty God (as well as the prejudice which doth accrue to our selves) by the sin of discontent, (a Catholick and Epidemical sin;) It did at first put me upon the study of this subject. Nor is it incongruous to handle this next in order to the* Christian Charter. *I shewed you there the*

* In statu maximè querulo & moroso positi sumus. Sen.

great things which a Beleever hath in reversion, Things to come are his; *and here, behold a Christians holy and gracious deportment in this life, which discovers it selfe in nothing more eminently, than in* Contentation. *Discontent is to the soul, as a disease to the body* * ; *it puts it out of temper, and doth much hinder its regular and sublime motions heaven-ward. Discontent is hereditary, and no doubt but it is much augmented by the many sad eclipses and changes that have fallen out of late in the body Politick; yet the disease is not to be pleaded for, because natural; but to be resisted because sinful. That which should make us out of love with this sullen distemper, is the contemplating the beautiful Queen of* Contentation *. *For my part, I know not any ornament in Religion that doth more bespangle a Christian, or glitter in the eye of God and man, then this of Contentment. Nor certainly is there any thing wherein all the Christian*

* Est animi aegritudo. Cic. Tusc. 4.

* Contraria juxta se posita, &c.

ver-

vertues do work more harmeniously, or shine more transparently, than in this Orb. Every grace doth act its part here, and help to keep the soul in its εὐκρασία; *this is the true Philosophers stone, which turnes all into gold; this is the curious enamel and embroidery of the heart, which makes Christs Spouse* all glorious within. *How should every Christian be ambitious to wear such a sparkling Diamond! If there be a blessed life before we come at Heaven, it is the contented life.* And *why not contented?* Why art thou wrath, and why is thy countenance fallen? * *Man of all creatures hath the least cause to be discontented. Canst thou deserve any thing from God? doth he owe thee any thing? What if the scene turne, and God puts thee under the* black rod? *Whereas he useth a rod, he might use a Scorpion; he might as well damne thee, as whip thee; Why then art thou so querulous? why dost thou give way to this*

* Gen. 4. 6.

irrational and unthankful sin of discontent: The good Lord humble his own people for nourishing such a viper in their breast, as doth not only cut out the bowels of their comfort, but spits venome in the face of God himselfe. O Christian, who art overspread with this freting leprosie, *thou carriest the* man of sinne *about thee; for thou settest thy selfe above God; and as if thou wert wiser than he, would'st saucily prescribe him what condition is best for thee. O this* devil of discontent, *which whomsoever it possesseth, it makes his heart a little Hell*. I know there will not be perfect contentment here in this life*,* οὐκ ὅστις πάντ' ἀνὴρ εὐδαιμονεῖ. *Perfect pleasure is only* at Gods right hand*, *yet we may begin here to tune our instrument before we play the sweet lesson of Contentment exactly in heaven. I should be glad if this little piece might be like* Moses *his casting the tree into the waters*, to make the uncouth, bit-*

* ταράττειν, exinde τὰρ ταρ☉.

* *Amplissimâ quaque lætitia subsit quæpiam vel parva querimonia* Lucius Apul. Florid l. 2.

* Ps. 16. 11,

* Ex. 15. 25

bitter condition of life, more ſweet and pleaſant to drink of. I have once more adventured into the publick; this *I acknowledge to be* rudi Minervâ, *home-ſpun*; *ſome better hand might have made a more curious draught: but having preached upon the ſubject, I was earneſtly ſolicited by ſome of my Hearers to publiſh it*; *and although it is not dreſt in that rich attire of eloquence, as it might*; *yet I am not about Poetry, or Oratory, but Divinity, nor is this intended for fancy, but practice. If I may herein do any ſervice, or caſt but a mite into the treaſury of the Churches grace, I have my deſire. The end of our living is to live to God, and to lift up his Name in the world* *. *The Lord adde an effectual bleſſing to this work, and faſten it as a naile in a ſure place*; *He of his mercy make it as ſpiritual Phyſick to purge the ill humour of diſcontent out of our hearts, that ſo a Crown of honour may be ſet upon the*

* Nihil turpius eſt quàm grandiu natu ſenex, qui nullum aliud habet argumentum quo probet ſe diù vixiſſe præter annum. Seneca de Tranquil.

head

head of Religion, and the crystal streames of joy and peace may ever runne in our soules: which is the prayer of him who is desirous to be a faithful Orator for thee at the Throne of grace,

From my study at
Stephens Walbrook,
May. 5. 1653.

THOMAS WATSON.

TO

TO THE
Christian Reader,

Word ſpoken in due ſeaſon, how good is it *? As God *giveth to his creatures their meat in ſeaſon**; ſo his *faithful ſtewards provide for his houſhold their portion of meat in due ſeaſon**. And as it is with corporal food, the ſeaſon addeth much both to the value and uſefulneſſe thereof, in like manner it is with food ſpiritual. In this regard, the brokenneſſe of theſe times (wherein the boſomes of moſt people are filled with diſquiets, and their mouths with murmurings) may well render this Treatiſe the more acceptable. The ſeas are not ſo ſtormy as mens ſpirits are tempeſtuous, toſſed to and fro with diſcontents. And now the Lord (*who maketh every thing beautiful in his time**) hath moſt opportunely put into thy hand a profitable diſcourſe to calme unquiet hearts. *Adam* in Paradiſe daſhed upon

* Prov. 15. 23
*Pſ 104.27
* Luke 12. 42.
*Eccl. 3. 11

upon the rock of discontent (which some Divines conceive was his first sin.) This with many instances more in Scripture, together with our own sad experience, doth both speak our danger and call for caution. Now *godliness* is the only soveraigne Antidote against this spreading disease; and Gods *grace* alone (being setled and exercised in the heart,) *Heb.13.9 can cause steadiness in stormy times *. Whereas, *contentation ariseth either from* * Dr. Hall. *the fruition of all comforts, or from a not desiring of some which we have not* *. True piety doth put a Christian into such a condition: Hereby we both possess God, and are taught how to improve him who is the only satisfying everlasting portion * Psal. 73. 25, 26. of his people *. Herein Christ (though *Mat.8.20 poor in this world *) greatly rejoyced. *The Lord is the portion of my inheritance,* *Ps.16.5,6 *the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant pla-* *Ubi bene esse poterit sine te? ubi male esse poterit cum te? Bern. *ces; yea, I have a goodly heritage *: upon this account also Jacob said, I have enough *; or (as it is in the Original) I have all, God the Father; and Christ his Sonne had sweet satisfaction in each other when there was no other being *; * Gen. 33. 11. *therefore such who possess and improve * Prov.8. 30, 31. God through Christ, cannot possibly be dis-

dissatisfied. The Almighty is the God of *all grace* *, of *all comfort* *; and *of salvations* *; in which respects neither deficiencies or disappointments, losses or crosses can cause disquieting discontents in that bosome where faith is commander in chief. The Prophet *Habakkuk* rejoyced in the *God of his salvation*, when *the pestilence went before him* *, *and burning coals came forth of his feet*; and when he supposed all creature-succors both for delight and necessity to be quite removed. This, this is the life which Christians should endeavor, and may attaine by the vigorous regular actings of precious faith. This is the gaine of Contentment, which comes in by godlinesse, when providences are black and likely to be bloody; now, *The just shall live by his faith* *. That speech of learned Mr. *Gataker* is weighty, and well worth the marking, *A contented minde argues a religious heart, and a discontented minde argues an irreligious heart.* And that worthy Divine Mr. *Greenham* was bold to say, *They never felt Gods love, or tasted forgivenesse of sins, who are discontented.* This likewise was an holy breathing of reverend Dr. *Hall* in his Meditations, *I have somewhat of the best things, I will with thank-*

* 1 Pet. 5. 10
* 2 Cor. 1. 4
* Ps. 68. 20.
* Hab. 3. 5.
* V. 17, 18
* Heb. 2. 4.
* Heb. 10. 38.

thankfulneſſe enjoy them, and will want the reſt with contentment. By attaining and maintaining this frame of heart, we might have much of heaven on this ſide heaven. Holy contentment maketh them truly rich, whom the oppreſſing world maketh very poor *. Hereby our ſweeteſt morſels ſhall be well ſeaſoned, and our bittereſt potions well ſweetned*. Had we learned to enjoy contentment in *Jehovah*, who is immutable and all-ſufficient, this heavenly frame of ſpirit ſhould never periſh or change in the mid'ſt of the moſt amazing alterations in Church and State, with which his Majeſty is pleaſed to exerciſe us; whereas *becauſe* we live alone upon ſublunaries, *therefore* we are apt with *Nabal* to die upon the neſt *, through dejectedneſſe, upon the approach of imagined dangers. When God ſeeth cauſe to cut us ſhort of many creature-accommodations, faith will moderate our deſires after them, aſſuring the ſoul that nothing is withdrawn, or withheld, which might be really advantageous; and doubtleſſe it is a great piece of happineſſe upon earth, not to long after that which the Lord is pleaſed to deny *. Indeed men act rather like Heathens then Chri-

* *Dives eſt qui ſua ſorte gaudet, animus eſt potiſſimum qui divites facit.* Sen.

* Pro. 17. 1

Nihil tam acerbum eſt, in quo non æquus animus ſolatium inveniat. Id.

* 1 Sam. 25. 37.

* *Beatus eſt qui quæ non habet, non cupit.* Aug. *Omnia habet, qui nihil concupiſcit.* Sen.

Christians, when they fret upon some particular inferiour disappointments, notwithstanding Gods liberality laid forth upon them in many other respects. As *Alexander* the Monarch of the world was discontented, because Ivie would not grow in his gardens at *Babylon*. *Diogenes* the Cynick was herein more wise, who finding a Mouse in his sachel, said, He saw that himselfe was not so poore, but some were glad of his leavings. Oh how might we (if we had hearts to improve higher providences) rock our peevish spirits quiet by much stronger arguments! let us then lay before our eyes the practices of pious men recorded in Scripture for our imitation, as *Jacob*, *Agur*, *Paul*, *&c.** and let us charge home upon our consciences, divine exhortations backed with strong reasons, and encouraged with sweet promises. It was the grave counsel of holy *Greenham*; *Having food and raiment, take the rest as an overplus.* Are we not lesse than the least of Gods mercies? Is not God our bountiful benefactor? why then do we not rest contented with his liberal allowance? Oh let us chide our wrangling spirits, and encourage confidence with contentment in God, as blest-

* Gen. 28. 20. Prov. 30. 8 1 Tim 6. 7. Gen. 32. 10 Psal. 43. 5.

blessed *David* did. My pen hath outrun my purpose when I undertook this Preface; but I will no longer (good Reader) detaine thee in the porch, wherein I have designed to quicken and to prepare thee to the more fruitful improvement of this seasonable useful Treatise; wherein the Authour hath exercised to good purpose, both the Christian graces, and ministerial gifts with which God hath enriched him. Herein the Doctrine of Christian contentment is clearly illustrated, and profitably applied; the special cases (wherein through change of Providences discontents are most commonly occasioned,) are particularized, and Preservatives applyed to secure the soul. Although some other worthy Divines have been helpful to the Church of God by their discourses upon this subject; yet there is much of peculiar use in this Treatise. The Apostle tells us that some *manifestation of the Spirit is given unto every man to profit withal*[a]. Thy soul-profit is propounded as the Authours end in publishing this piece: and that this end may be accomplished, is the unfained desire, and hearty prayer of him who is

[a] 1 Cor. 12. 7.

Thy servant in and for Christ,

May 3. 1653. SIMEON ASHE.

THE ART OF DIVINE CONTENTMENT.

CHAP. I.

The Introduction to the Text.

Phil. 4. 11.

I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

THese words are brought in by way of *Prolepsis*, to anticipate and prevent an Objection. The Apostle had in the former Verses, laid down many grave and heavenly exhortations;

among the reſt, to be *careful for nothing*, Verſe 6. Not to exclude,

* *Neque enim prohibetur quòd homo de rebus in poſterum neceſſariis non ſolicitetur.* Aquin. *in* Heb. 13. 1 Tim. 5.8.

1. A *prudential care* *. For, *He that provideth not for his own houſe, hath denyed the Faith, and is worſe then an Infidel.* Nor, 2. A *Religious care.* For, we muſt give all *diligence to make our Calling and Election ſure* *. But 3. To ex-

* 2 Pet. 1.10.

* *Jubet Apoſtolus, aut deponatur anxia cura, quòd illa non niſi ex infidelitate proficiſcatur.* Zanchy. * Mat. 6.25.

clude all * *anxious care* about the iſſues and events of things; *Take no thought for your life, what you ſhall eat* *; and in this ſenſe it ſhould be a Chriſtians care not to be carefull. The word in the Greeke [*Careful*] comes from a Primitive *, that ſignifies, *To cut the heart in peeces*, a ſoule-dividing Care: take heed of this. We are bid to *commit* * *our way unto the Lord*: the Hebrew word is, *Roll* * *thy way upon the Lord.* It is our work to caſt

* Dicitur μεριμνᾶν παρὰ τὸ μερίζειν τὴν ψυχήν.

* Pſal. 37.5. גּוֹל עַל יְהוָה דַּרְכֶּךָ.

care

care*, and it is Gods work to take care. By our immoderacy we take his work out of his hand. * 1 Pet. 5. 7.

Care, when it is *excentrick*, either diſtruſtful, or diſtracting, is very diſhonourable to God; it takes away his providence as if he ſate in heaven, and minded not what became of things here below; like a man that makes a clock, and then leaves it to go of it ſelfe. Immoderate care takes the heart off from better things, and uſually while we are thinking how we ſhall do to live, we forget how to die. *Curis tabeſcimus omnes.* —— Care is a ſpiritual canker, that doth waſt and diſpirit; *& cui bono?* We may ſooner by our care add a *furlong* to our grief, then a *cubit* to our comfort. God doth threaten it as a curſe, *They ſhall eat their bread with carefulneſs**: better faſt, than eat of that bread. *Be carefull for nothing.* * Ezek. 12. 19.

Now leſt any one ſhould ſay,

yea, *Paul*, thou preacheſt that to us, which thou haſt ſcarce learned thy ſelfe; Haſt thou learned not to be careful? The Apoſtle ſeems tacitly to anſwer that, in the words of the Text; *I have learned in whatſoever ſtate I am, therewith to be content.*

Egregia Sententia! A ſpeech worthy to be engraven upon our hearts, and to be written in letters of Gold upon the Crownes and Diadems of Princes. The Text doth branch it ſelf into theſe two general parts.

I. The Scholar, *Paul*: *I have learned.*

II. The Leſſon: *In every ſtate to be content.*

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The first branch of the Text. The Scholar, *with the first Proposition.*

I Begin with the first. I. The Scholar, and his proficiency; *I have learned.* Out of which I shall *in transitu* observe two things by way of paraphrase. 1. It is not ἤκουσα, but ἐμαθον. The Apostle doth not say, I have *heard*, that in every estate I should be content; but, I have *learned.* Whence 1. Doctr. *It is not enough for Christians to hear their duty, but they must learne their duty.* It is one thing to heare, and another thing to learne; as it is one thing to eat, and another thing to concoct. Saint *Paul* was a Practi-

1.

1. *Observ.* ἐμαθον, it is a practique word.

Doctr.

tioner. Christians hear much, but it is to be feared, learn little. There were four sorts of ground in the Parable*, and but one good ground. An embleme of this truth; many *Hearers* but few *Learners*. There are two things which keep us from learning.

* Luk. 8. 5.

1. *Slighting what we hear.* Christ is the *Pearle of Price*; when we disesteeme this Pearle, we shall never learne, either its value, or its vertue. The Gospel is a rare Mystery; in one place it is call'd the * *Gospel of grace*, in another, * *the Gospel of glory*; because in it, as in a transparent Glasse the glory of God is resplendent; But, he that hath learned to contemne this Mystery, will hardly ever learn to obey it. He that looks upon the things of Heaven as things by the by, and perhaps the driving of a trade, or carrying on some politick designe to be of greater importance; this

1.

* τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς χάριτος. Act. 20. 24

* τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς δόξης. 2 Cor. 4. 4.

this man is in the high road to damnation, and will hardly ever learne the things of his peace. Who will learne that which he thinks is ſcarce worth learning?

2. *Forgetting what we hear* *. If a Scholar have his Rules laid before him, and he forgets them as faſt as he reads them, he will never learn *. *Ariſtotle* calls the Memory the *Scribe* of the Soul; and *Bernard* calls it the *Stomack* of the Soul, becauſe it hath a retentive faculty, and turnes heavenly food into blood and ſpirits. We have great memories in other things; we remember that which is *vain*. *Cyrus* could remember the name of every Souldier in his huge Army; we remember *injuries* *. This is to fill a precious Cabinet with dung; but, *quàm facilis oblivio boni?* as *Hierom* ſaith, how ſoon do we forget the ſacred truths of God? We are apt to forget three things; our *faults*, our

2.

* *Tantum ſcimus quantum in memoria tenemus*, Plato *in* Timæo.

* Jam. 1 25

* *Scribit in marmore* Iaſus. Cicero l. 2. de orat.

friends, our *instructions*. Many Christians are like Sieves; put a Sieve into the water, and it is full; but take it forth of the water, and all runnes out: So, while they are hearing of a Sermon, they remember something; but *take the Sieve out of the water*, assoone as they are gone out of the Church, all is forgotten. *Let these sayings* (saith Christ) *sinke down into your eares* *; in the Original it is, *put these sayings into your eares* *. As a man that would hide a jewel from being stollen, locks it up safe in his chest. *Let them sinke*; The word must not only fall as dew that wets the leafe, but as raine which soakes to the root of the tree, and makes it fructifie. Oh how often doth Satan, that fowle of the Aire, pick up the good seed that is sowne!

* Luke 9. 44

* θέσθε ὑμεῖς.

Use. Trial. *Use.* Let me put you upon a serious trial; Some of you have heard

heard much; you have lived forty, fifty, sixty years under the blessed Trumpet of the Gospel; What have you learned? you may have heard a thousand Sermons, and yet not learned one. Search your consciences.

1. You have heard much against sin: are you *Hearers?* or are you *Scholars?* 1.

How many Sermons have you heard against *Covetousnesse*; That it is the *root*, on which Pride, Idolatry, Treason do grow* ? one cals it a * Metropolitan sin: It is *malum complexum*, it doth twist a great many sinnes in with it. There is hardly any sinne, but Covetousnesse is a maine ingredient into it; and yet are you like the two daughters of the Horse-leach, that cry, *give, give.* How much have you heard against *rash Anger*, that it is a short phrensie*, a dry drunkennesse; That it rests in the bosome

* 2 Tim. 4. 2. & 4. * Μητροπολιν πασης κακιας.

* Ira est brevis insania. Sen.

* *Quid prodeſt vinum non bibere, & ira inebriari?* Hieron. Eccl. 7. 9.
* *Magnoque irarum fluctuat æſtu.* Virg.

boſome of fooles *; and upon the leaſt occaſion do your ſpirits * begin to take fire? How much have you heard againſt *Swearing?* It is Chriſts expreſſe mandate, *Sweare* *Mat. 5. 34 *not at all* *; this ſinne of all other may be term'd the *unfruitful work* *Eph. 5. 11 *of darkneſſe* *. It is neither ſweetned with pleaſure, nor enriched with profit (the uſual vermillion wherewith Satan doth paint ſinne.) Swearing is forbidden with a *ſub pœna.* While the ſwearer ſhoots his oaths, like *flying arrowes* at God, to pierce his glory; God ſhoots a *flying roll* of curſes * againſt him; * Zach. 5. v. 2. & 4. and do you make your tongue a *racket*, by which you toſſe oaths as Teniſ-balls? Do you ſport your ſelves with oaths as the Philiſtines did with *Samſon*, which will at laſt pull the houſe about your eares? Alas! how have they learned what ſin is, that have not yet learned

learned to leave ſinne? doth he know what a viper is, that playes with it?

2. You have heard much of Chriſt, have you learned Chriſt? The Jewes (as one ſaith) carried Chriſt in their *Bibles*, but not in their *heart* *; Their ſound *went into all the earth* *, Rom. 10. 18. The Prophets and Apoſtles were as Trumpets, whoſe ſound went abroad into the world; yet many thouſands who heard the noiſe of theſe Trumpets, had not learned Chriſt, *They haue not all obeyed*, ver. 16 *.

* Hieron.
* Rom. 10 18.

* οὐ πάντες ὑπήκουσαν.

1. A man may know much of Chriſt, and yet not learn Chriſt. The *devils* knew Chriſt *.

* Mat. 1. 24

2. A man may preach Chriſt, and yet not learn Chriſt; as *Judas* and the pſeudo-Apoſtles *.

* Phil. 5. 15

3. A man may profeſſe Chriſt, and yet not learn Chriſt. There are many Profeſſors in the world

world that Christ will professe a-
* Mat. 7. 22, 23. gainst *.

Quest. What is it then to learn
Quest. Christ? *Answ.* 1. To learn Christ
Ans. 1. is to be *made like Christ*; when the divine Characters of his Holiness are engraven upon our hearts. *We all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed*
*2 Cor. 3. 18 *into the same image* *. There is a μεταμορφούμεθα. Metamorphosis made; a sinner viewing Christs Image in the glasse of the Gospel, is transformed into that Image. Never did any man look upon Christ with a spiritual eye, but went away quite changed. A true St. is a divine Landskip or picture, where all the rare beauties of Christ are lively pourtrayed and drawn forth. He hath the same Spirit, the same judgement, the same will with Jesus Christ.

2. To learne Christ, is to *believe*
* Joh. 20. 28. in him; *My Lord, my God** . When we do not only *credere Deum*, but *in*

Deum

Deum; which is the actual application of Christ to our selves, and as it were the spreading of the sacred medicine of his blood upon our souls. You that have heard much of Christ, and yet cannot with an humble adherence say, *My Jesus*; be not offended if I tell you, the devil can say his Creed as well as you.

3. To learne Christ, is to *live Christ*. When we have Bible-conversations, our lives as rich Diamonds cast a sparkling lustre in the Church of God *; and are (in some sense) parallel with the life of Christ, as the Transcript with the Original. So much for the first notion of the word.

* Phil. 1. 27.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Containing the Second Propoſition.

II. 2. *Obſerv.* ἐμαθον is a word imports difficulty.

II. THis word ἐμαθον, I *have learned*, is a word imports difficulty, it ſhews how hardly the Apoſtle came by his contentment of minde; it was not *naturâ genitum*. St. *Paul* did not come naturally by it, but he had *learned* it*. It coſt him many a prayer and teare, it was taught him by the Spirit.

* *Ἐμαθον ſignificat hanc rem eſſe diſciplina, & exercitationis, & ſe divinitus edoctum eſſe.* Eſtius *in loc.* Beza.

Non ex revelatione, aut ex libris didicit, ſed ex longo rerum uſu, & gratiâ Chriſti per Spiritum reſidentem. Zanchy.

Doctr. 2.

Whence *Doct.* 2. *Good things are hard to come by.* The buſineſſe of religion is not ſo facile as moſt do imagine. I have *learned*, ſaith St. *Paul**. Indeed you need not learn a man to ſin, this is

* Ἀρα διδασκαλίας ἐστὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα καὶ γυμνασίας καὶ μελέτης, ὃ δὲ εὐκατόρθωτόν ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ σφόδρα δύσκολον, καὶ καινόν. Chryſoſt.

is natural *, and therefore facile, it comes as water out of a Spring. 'Tis an easie thing to be wicked; Hell will be taken without storm *; but matter of Religion must be learned. To cut the flesh is easie; but to prick a vain, and not cut an artery is hard. The trade of sinne needs not to be learned, but the *Art of Divine Contentment* is not atchieved without holy industry; μαθον *I have learned.* * Pl. 58.3.

* *Facilis descensus Averni.*

There are two pregnant reasons, why there must be so much study and exercitation.

1. Because spiritual things are *against nature.* Every thing in Religion is antipodes to nature. There are in Religion two things, *Credenda, & Facienda,* and both are against nature. 1. *Credenda,* Matters of *faith.* As, for a man to be justified by the righteousnesse of another, to become a foole that he may be wise, to save all by losing all; this is *against nature.* 2. *Facienda*

1. *Contra naturam.*

1. *Credenda*

2. *Facienda*

enda, Matters of *Practice*. As; 1. *Self-denial*; for a man to deny his own *wisdome*, and see himselfe blinde; his own *will*, and have it melted into the will of God; plucking out the right eye, beheading and crucifying that sin, which is the *favorite*, and lies neareſt to the heart*; For a man to be dead to the world, and in the midſt of want to abound; for him to take up the Croſſe, and follow Chriſt, not only in golden, but bloody paths; to embrace Religion when it is dreſs'd in its night-cloaths, all the Jewels of honour and preferment being pull'd off; this is *againſt nature*, and therefore muſt be learned. 2. *Self-examination*. For a man to take his heart (as a watch) all in pieces; to ſet up a ſpiritual inquiſition, or Court of conſcience, and traverſe things in his own ſoul; to take *Davids* candle and lantern*, and ſearch for ſin; nay, as Judge to paſſe the ſentence upon him-

* *Peccatum in deliciis.* Bern.

Malumus vitium excuſare, quam excutere. Sen

* Pſal. 119. Ver. 105.

himself, * this is *against nature*, and will not easily be attained to without Learning. 3. *Self-reformation.* To see a man as *Caleb*, *of another spirit*, walking antipodes to himself, the current of his life altered, and running into the channel of Religion; this is wholly *against nature*; When a stone ascends, it is not a natural motion, but a violent; the motion of the soul heaven-ward, is a violent motion, it must be learned: flesh and blood is not skill'd in these things: Nature can no more cast out Nature, then Satan can cast out Satan.

* 2 Sam. 24. 17. *Me me adsum qui feci in me convertite ferrum.*

2. Because spiritual things are *above nature*. There are some things *in nature* that are hard to find out, as the causes of things, which are not learned without studie. *Aristotle*, a great Philosopher (whom some have call'd an Eagle fallen from the clouds,) yet could not finde out the motion of the River *Euripus*, there-

2. *Supra naturam.*

fore threw himſelf into it; What then are divine things, which are in a ſphere above Nature, and beyond all humane diſquiſition? as the Trinity, the hypoſtatical Union, the myſtery of Faith to beleeve againſt hope; onely Gods Spirit can light our candle here. The Apoſtle calls

*Τὰ βάθη τοῦ Θεοῦ. 1 Cor. 2. 10

theſe *the deep things of God* *. The Goſpel is full of Jewels, but they are lock'd up from ſenſe and reaſon. The Angels in heaven are ſearching into theſe ſacred depths*.

* 1 Pet. 1. 12.

Uſe *Uſe* Let us beg the Spirit of God to teach us; we muſt be *divinitùs edocti*: The Eunuch could read, but he could not underſtand, till *Philip joyned himſelf to his chariot* *. Gods Spirit muſt joyn himſelf to our chariot; He muſt teach, or we cannot learn: *All thy children ſhall be taught of the Lord* *. A man may read the figure on the Dial, but he cannot tell how the day goes, unleſs the Sun ſhine upon the Dial; we may read

* Act. 8. 29

* Iſa. 54. 13.

the

the Bible over, but we cannot learn to purpose; till the Spirit of God *shine into our hearts* *. Oh, implore this blessed Spirit, it is Gods Prerogative Royal to teach. *I am the Lord thy God, that teacheth thee to profit* *. Ministers may *tell* us our lesson, God only can *teach* us; We have lost both our hearing and eye-sight, therefore are very unfit to learn. Ever since *Eve* listened to the Serpent, we have been deafe; and since she looked on the tree of Knowledge, we have been blinde; but when God comes to teach, he removes these impediments *. We are naturally *dead* *; who will go about to teach a dead man? Yet behold, God undertakes to make dead men to understand mysteries! God is the grand Teacher. This is the reason the word preached works so differently upon men: two in a Pew; the one is wrought upon effectually, the other lies at the Or-

* 2 Cor. 4. 6.

* Isa. 48. 17.

* Isa. 35. 5.
* Eph. 2. 1.

dinances as a dead childe at the breſt, and gets no nouriſhment. What is the reaſon? becauſe the heavenly gale of the Spirit blowes upon one, and not upon the other; One hath *the anointing of God, which teacheth him all things* *, the other hath it not. Gods Spirit ſpeakes ſweetly, but irreſiſtibly. In that heavenly doxology, none could ſing the new ſong, but thoſe who were *ſealed in their foreheads* *: reprobates could not ſing it *. Thoſe that are skilful in the myſteries of ſalvation, muſt have the ſeal of the Spirit upon them. Let us make this our prayer, *Lord, breath thy Spirit into thy Word*: and we have a promiſe, which may adde wings to prayer. *If* * *ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children: how much more ſhall your heavenly Father give his Spirit to them that ask him?*

* 1 John 2. 27.

*Rev 14 2

* *Novum Canticum reprobi diſcere non poſſunt.* Paræus.

*Luke 11. 13.

And thus much of the firſt part of the

the Text, *The Scholar*, which I intended only as a ſhort gloſſe or paraphraſe.

CHAP IV.

The ſecond branch of the Text, The Leſſon *it ſelfe*, *with the Propoſition.*

II. I Come now to the ſecond, which is the maine thing, *The Leſſon* it ſelf; *In whatever ſtate I am, therewith to be content.* II.

Here was a rare piece of learning indeed, and certainly more to be wondered at in Saint *Paul*, that he knew how to turne himſelf to every condition, then all the learning in

the world beſides, which hath been ſo applauded in former ages by *Julius Cæſar*, *Ptolomy*, *Xenophon*, the great admirers of learning.

The Text hath but few words in it, *In every ſtate Content*; but if that be true which once *Fulgentius* ſaid, that the moſt golden ſentence is ever meaſured by *brevity* and *ſuavity*, then this is a moſt accompliſhed ſpeech: here is *magnum in parvo*. The Text is like a precious Jewel, little in *quantity*, but great in *worth* and *value*.

The maine Propoſition I ſhall inſiſt upon, is this, *That a gracious ſpirit is a contented ſpirit.* The Doctrine of contentment is very ſuperlative; and till we have learned this, we have not learned to be Chriſtians.

Doct.

1. It is an *hard Leſſon*. The Angels in heaven had not learned it; they were not contented. Though their eſtate was very glorious, yet they

they were ſtill ſoaring aloft, and aimed at ſomething higher. *Jude ver. 6. The Angels which kept not their firſt eſtate.* They kept not their eſtate, becauſe they were not contented with their eſtate. Our firſt Parents cloath'd with the white robe of innocency in Paradiſe, had not learned to be content; they had aſpiring hearts, and thinking their humane nature too low & home-ſpun, would be crowned with the Deity, and be *as gods* *; Though they had the choice of all the trees in the Garden, yet none would content them but the *tree of Knowledge*, which they ſuppoſed would have been as eye-ſalve to have made them omniſcient. Oh then, if this Leſſon were ſo hard to learne *in innocency*, how hard ſhall we finde it*, who are clogged with corruption?

Gen. 3. 5.

* *Ars omnino mira & difficilis, quæ tanto cor ſis adniſu diſcenda eſt.* Greg. hom. 16. in Ezech.

2. It is of *Univerſal extent*, it concernes all. 1. It concernes *Rich men*. One would think it needleſſe

to presse those to Contentment whom God hath blessed with great estates, but rather perswade them to be humble and thankful; nay, but I say, *be content*. Rich men have their discontents as well as others. As appears, 1. When they have a great estate, yet they are discontented that they have no more; they would make the hundred talents a thousand. A man in wine, the more he drinks, the more he thirsts: Covetousnesse is a dry dropsie; an earthly heart is like the *grave*, *that is never satisfied* *; therefore I say to you rich men, *be content*.

*Sicut hydropicus, Quò plus sunt potæ, plus siti untur aquæ Hyperius.

2. Rich men, if we may suppose them to be content with their estates (which is very seldome;) yet, though they have *estate* enough, they have not *honour* enough *; if their *barnes* are full enough, yet their *turrets* are not high enough. They would be some body in the world, as *Theudas who boasted himselfe to be some body* *; they

*Prov. 30. 16

*τὴν εὐδοξίαν ἡδὺ ἡγοῦνται.

*Act. 5. 36.

they never go so chearfully, as when the winde of honor and applause fills their sails; if this wind be down, they are discontented. One would think *Haman* had as much as his proud heart could desire; he was set above all the Princes, advanced upon the pinacle of honour to be the second man in the Kingdom *; yet in the midst of all his pompe, because *Mordecai* would not uncover and kneele, he is discontented, *vers.* 2. and full of wrath, *ver.* 5. and there is no way to asswage this pleurisie of revenge, but by letting all the Jewes blood, and offering them up in sacrifice. The itch of honour is seldom allayed without blood; therefore I say to you rich men, *be content.*

* Esth. 3.

3. Rich men, if we may suppose them to be content with their honour, and magnificent titles; yet they have not alwayes Contentment in their *relations.* She that lyes in the bosome, may sometimes blow the coals

coales; as *Jobs* wife, who in a pet would have him fall out with God himſelf, *Curſe God and die.* Sometimes children cauſe diſcontent; how oft is it ſeen that the mothers milk doth nouriſh a Viper? and he that once ſucked her breaſt, goes about to ſuck her blood? Parents do often *of Grapes* gather thornes, and of *figs* thiſtles; Children are ſweet-briar. Like the Roſe, which is a fragrant flower; but, as *Baſil* ſaith, it hath its prickles. Our Relative comforts are not all pure wine, but mixed; they have in them more dregs then ſpirits, and are like that River *Plutarch* ſpeaks of *, where the waters in the morning run ſweet, but in the evening run bitter. We have no *charter of exemption* granted us in this life; therefore rich men had need be called upon to be contented.

*γλυκὺ πικρὸν.

2. The Doctrine of Contentment concernes poore men. You that do ſuck ſo liberally from the breſts

breſts of providence, *be content*; it is an hard Leſſon, therefore it had need be ſet upon the ſooner. How hard is it when the livelihood is even gone, a great eſtate boyled away almoſt to nothing, then to be content? The means of ſubſiſtence is in Scripture called *our life*, becauſe it is the very ſinewes of life. The woman in the Goſpel ſpent *all her living upon the Phyſicians* *; in the Greek it is, ὅλον τὸν βίον, She ſpent her whole life upon the Phyſicians, becauſe ſhe ſpent her means by which ſhe ſhould live. Tis much when poverty hath clipped our wings, then to be content: but, *difficilia pulchra*, though hard, it is excellent; and the Apoſtle here had learnt *in every ſtate to be content*.

* Luk. 8. 43.

God had brought Saint *Paul* into as great variety of conditions, as ever we read of any man, and yet he was content; elſe ſure he could never have gone through it with ſo much chear-

chearfulneſſe. See into what viciſſitudes this bleſſed Apoſtle was caſt. * 2 Cor. 4. 8. *We are troubled on every ſide* *, there was the *ſadneſs* of his condition; *but not diſtreſſed*, there was his *content* in that condition; *We are perplexed*, there is his *affliction*; but *not in deſpaire*, there is his contentation. And if we read a little further, *In afflictions* * 2 Cor. 6. 4. *, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes, in ſtripes, in impriſonments, in tumults, &c.* there is his trouble: and behold * Ver. 10. his content; * *As having nothing, yet poſſeſſing all things.* When the Apoſtle was driven out of all, yet in regard of that ſweet Contentment of minde (which was like muſick in his ſoul,) he poſſeſſed all. We read a ſhort Map or Hiſtory of his ſufferings, *In priſons more frequent* * 2 Cor. 11. 23, 24, 25. *, in deaths oft, &c.* Yet behold the bleſſed frame and temper of his ſpirit, *I have learned in whatſoever ſtate I am, therewith to be content.*

Which way ſoever Providence did

did blow, he had ſuch heavenly skill and dexterity, that he knew how to ſteer his courſe. For his outward eſtate he was indifferent; he could be either on the top of *Jacobs* ladder, or the bottom; he could ſing either *placentia* or *lachryma*, the dirge or the antheme; he could be any thing that God would have him: *I know how to want, how to abound*; here is a rare patterne for us to imitate. *Paul* in regard of his faith and courage, was like a Cedar, he could not be ſtirred: but for his outward condition, he was like a *Reed*, bending every way with the winde of Providence. When a proſperous gale did blow upon him, he could bend with that *I know how to be full*: and when a boyſterous guſt of affliction did blow, he could bend in humility with that; *I know how to be hungry*. Saint *Paul* was ἀνὴρ τετράγωνος (as *Ariſtotle* ſpeaks) like a *Die* that hath foure ſquares; throw it which way you wil,

it

Homo quadratus. Erasm.

it falls upon a bottome: Let God throw the Apostle which way he would, he fell upon this *bottome* of Contentment. A contented spirit is like a Watch; though you carry it up & down with you, yet the spring of it is not shaken, nor the wheeles out of order, but the watch keeps its perfect motion: So it was with St. *Paul*, though God had carried him into various conditions, yet he was not lift up with the one, nor cast down with the other. The *spring* of his heart was not broken, the *wheels* of his affections were not disordered, but kept their constant motion towards heaven; *still content.* The Ship that lyes at anchor may sometimes be a little shaken, but never sinks: Flesh and blood may have its fears and disquiets, but grace doth check them: A Christian having cast anchor in heaven, his heart never sinks; a gracious spirit is a contented spirit.

This

This is a rare Art, *Paul* did not learn it at the feet of *Gamaliel*. *I am instructed* : μεμύημαι *; *ver.* 12. I am initiated into this holy myſtery, as if he had ſaid, I have gotten the *divine Art*, I have the knack of it; God muſt make us right Artiſts. If we ſhould put ſome men to an Art that they are not skill'd in, how unfit would they be for it? put an husband-man to Limning or drawing Pictures, what ſtrange work would he make? this is out of his ſphere. Take a Limner that is exact in laying of colours & put him to plough, or ſet him to planting and graffing of trees, this is not his Art, he is not skill'd in it; Bid a natural man live by faith, and when all things go croſſe, *Be contented*; you bid him do that he hath no skill in, you may as well bid a childe guide the ſterne of a Ship; To live contented upon God in the deficiency of outward comforts, is an Art which *fleſh and blood*

*μεμύημαι, *Myſteriis initiatus ſum.* Zanchy *Sacris imbutus ſum.* Ambroſ.

blood hath not revealed; nay, many of Gods own children, who excel in ſome duties of Religion, when they come to this of *Contentment*, how do they bungle? they have ſcarce commenced Maſters of this Art.

CHAP. V.

The reſolving of ſome Queſtions.

FOr the illuſtration of this Doctrine, I ſhall propound theſe Queſtions.

Queſt. *Queſt.* 1. Whether a Chriſtian may not be ſenſible of his condition, and yet be contented?

Anſw. 1 *Anſw.* Yes; For elſe he is not a *Saint*, but a *Stoick*. *Rachel* did well to weep for her children, (*there was nature*;) but her fault was, ſhe refuſed to be comforted, (*there was diſcontent.*)

content.) Christ himselfe was *sensible* when he sweat great drops of blood, and said, *Father, if it be possible, let this cup passe from me* *: yet he was *contented*, and sweetly submitted his will. *Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* The Apostle bids us *humble our selves under the mighty hand of God* *; which we cannot do unlesse we are sensible of it.

* Mat. 26. 39.

* 2 Pet 5 6.

Qu. 2. Whether a Christian may not lay open his grievances to God, and yet be contented?

Quest.

Answ. Yes: *Unto thee have I opened my cause*, Jer. 20. 12. * and *David powred out his complaint before the Lord* *. We may cry to God, and desire him to write down all our injuries; Shall not the childe complaine to his Father? When any burden is upon the spirit, Prayer gives vent, it easeth the heart: *Hannah's* spirit was burdened, *I am* (saies she) *a woman of a troubled spirit* *.

Answ.

* Jer. 20. 12

* Pf. 142. 2

* 1 Sam. 1 18.

Now having prayed and wept, she went away, and was no more sad; only, here is the difference between an holy complaint, and a discontented complaint; in the one we complain *to* God, in the other we complain *of* God.

Quest. *Quest.* 3. What is it properly that Contentment doth exclude?

Answ. *Answ.* There are three things which Contentment doth banish out of its Diocess, and can by no means consist with it.

What contentment excludes.

1. It excludes a *vexatious repining*; this is properly the daughter of Discontent. *I mourn in my complaint**: he doth not say, I murmur in my complaint. Murmuring is no better than mutiny in the heart; it is a rising up against God. When the Sea is rough and unquiet, it casts forth nothing but foame; when the heart is discontented, it casts forth the foame of anger, impatience, and sometimes little better than blas-

* Ps. 55. 2.

phemy.

phemy. Murmuring is nothing elſe but the ſcum which boyles off from a diſcontented heart.

2. It excludes an *uneven diſcompoſure*: When a man ſaith, I am in ſuch ſtraits, that I know not how to evolve or get out; I ſhall be undone. Head and heart are ſo taken up, that a man is not fit to pray, or meditate, &c. he is not himſelf: juſt as when an Army is routed, one man runs this way, and another that, the Army is put into diſorder: So a mans thoughts run up and down diſtracted. Diſcontent doth diſlocate and unjoynt the ſoul, it pulls off the wheeles.

3. It excludes a *childiſh diſpondency*, and this is uſually conſequent upon the other. A man being in an hurry of mind, not knowing which way to extricate, or winde himſelfe out of the preſent trouble, begins *ſuccumbere oneri*, to faint and ſink under it. For care is to the minde

as a burden to the back, it loads the ſpirits, and with overloading ſinks them. A deſpondent ſpirit is a diſcontented ſpirit.

CHAP. VI.

Shewing the nature of Contentment.

What contentation is.

HAving anſwered theſe Queſtions, I ſhall in the next place come to deſcribe this αὐτάρκεια, or Contentment.

It is a ſweet temper of ſpirit whereby a Chriſtian carries himſelf * in an equal poize in every condition. The nature of this will appear more clear in theſe three Aphoriſms.

* *Se æquanimiter fert.* Bede.

1. *Aphoriſm.* Αὐτάρκεια non acquiſitione, ſed infuſione.

1. Contentment is a *divine thing*; it becomes ours not by *acquiſition*, but *infuſion*; it is a ſlip taken off from the tree of life, and planted by the

the Spirit of God in the ſoul; it is a fruit that grows not in the garden of Philoſophy, but is of an heavenly birth: It is therefore very obſervable, that *Contentment* is joyned with Godlineſſe, and goes in equipage; *But godlineſſe with Contentment is great gaine**. Contentment being a conſequent of godlineſſe, or concomitant, or *both*: I call it *divine* to contradiſtinguiſh it to that Contentment which a moral man may arrive at. Heathens have ſeemed to have this Contentment, but it was only εἰκὼν τῆς ἀρετῆς, the ſhadow and picture of it; the *Beryll*, not the true *Diamond*: theirs was but *civil*, this is *ſacred*: theirs was only from principles of *Reaſon*, this of *Religion*: theirs was only lighted at Natures torch, this at the Lamp of Scripture. Reaſon may a little teach Contentment; as thus, Whatever my condition be, this is that I am born to, and if I meet with croſſes, it is

* 1 Tim. 6. 6.

but πάντων φορτίον, a Catholick misery; all have their ſhare, why therefore ſhould I be troubled *? Reaſon may ſuggeſt this; and indeed, this may be rather *conſtraint*, then *content*; but to live ſecurely and chearfully upon God in the abatement of creature-ſupplies, *Religion* only can bring this into the ſouls exchequer.

* Ferre quam ſortem omnes patiuntur, nemo recuſat.

2. Contentment is an *intrinſecal thing*, it lyes within a man; not in the bark, but the root. Contentment hath both its fountaine, and ſtreame in the ſoul. The Beam hath not its light from the Aire: the beams of comfort which a contented man hath, do not ariſe *extrinſecè* from forreigne comforts, but from within. As ſorrow is ſeated in the ſpirit, *The heart knows its own grief**: So Contentment lies within in the *ſoul*, and doth not depend upon externals. Hence I gather, that outward troubles cannot hinder this

2. Aphoriſm.

* Prov. 14. 10.

this bleſſed Contentment; it is a ſpiritual thing, and ariſeth from ſpiritual grounds, *viz. The apprehenſion of Gods love.* When there is a tempeſt without, there may be muſick within: a Bee may ſting through the skin, but it cannot ſting to the heart: Outward afflictions cannot ſting to a Chriſtians heart, where Contentment lyes. Thieves may plunder us of our money and plate, but not of this pearle of Contentment, unleſſe we are willing to part with it; for it is locked up in the *cabinet of the heart.* The ſoul which is poſſeſſed of this rich treaſure of Contentment, is like *Noah* in the Ark, that can ſing in the midſt of a Deluge.

3. Contentment is an *Habitual thing*, it ſhines with a fixed light in the firmament of the ſoul. Contentment doth not appear only now and then, as ſome Starrs which are ſeen but ſeldome: it is a ſetled tem- 3. *Aphoriſm.*

per of the heart. One action doth not denominate: he is not said to be a liberal man, that gives almes once in his life; a covetous man may do so; but he is said to be liberal, that is *given to liberality* *; that is, who upon all occasions is willing to indulge the necessities of the poor: so he is said to be a contented man that is given to Contentment. It is not *casual*, but *constant*. *Aristotle* in his Rhetorick, distinguisheth between colours in the face that arise from *passion*, and those which arise from *complexion*; the pale face may look red when it blusheth, but this is only a passion: he is said properly to be ruddy and sanguine, who is constantly so, it is his complexion. He is not a contented man who is so upon an occasion, (and perhaps when he is pleased;) but who is so constantly, it is the habit and complexion of his soul.

*Rom. 12. 13.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Reaſons preſſing to holy Contentment.

HAving opened the nature of Contentment, I come next to lay down ſome reaſons, or arguments to Contentment, which may preponderate with us.

The firſt is, *Gods precept.* It is charged upon us as a duty; *Be content with ſuch things as you have* *; the ſame God who hath bid us beleeve, hath bid us be content; if we obey not, we run our ſelves into a ſpiritual *præmunire.* Gods Word is a ſufficient warrant; it hath *authority* in it, and muſt be a *ſuperſedeas*, or *ſacred Spell* to diſcontent; *Ipſe dixit* was enough among *Pythagoras* his Scholars *Be it enacted*, is the

Reaſon. 1. *Virtute præcepti.*

* Heb 13. 5

the Royal ſtile. Gods word muſt be the ſtar that guides, and his Will the weight that moves our obedience; his *fiat* is a Law, and hath majeſty enough in it to captivate us into obedience; our hearts muſt not be more unquiet than the raging ſea, which at his Word is ſtill'd *.

* Mar. 8. 26.

Reaſon 2. Virtute promiſſi.

2. The ſecond reaſon inforcing Contentment, is, *Gods promiſe*: For, *He hath ſaid, I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee*, Heb. 13. 5. where God hath engaged himſelfe, under hand and ſeale, for our neceſſary proviſions. If a King ſhould ſay to one of his Subjects, I will take care for thee; as long as I have any Crown-revenewes, thou ſhalt be provided for; if thou art in danger, I will ſecure thee; if in want, I will ſupply thee; would not that Subject be content? Behold, God hath here made a promiſe to the Beleever, and as it were entered into bond for his ſecurity,

rity, *I will never leave thee*; Shall not this charm down the Devil of Diſcontent? *Leave thy fatherleſs children with me, I will preſerve them alive* *. Me thinks I ſee the godly man on his death-bed much diſcontented, and heare him complaining, What will become of my wife and children when I am dead and gone? they may come to poverty: ſaith God, Trouble not thy ſelfe, *be content*, I will take care of thy children, and, *Let thy widow truſt in me*. God hath made a Promiſe to us, *that he will not leave us*, and hath entail'd the Promiſe upon our *wife and children*; and will not this ſatisfie? True Faith will take Gods ſingle bond without calling for witneſſes.

* Jer. 49. 11

Be contented, *by vertue of a Decree*. Whatever our condition be, God the great Umpire of the world hath *ab æterno* decreed that condition for us, and by his providence

Reaſon 3. *Virtue Decreti.*

dence ordered all appertinances thereunto. Let a Christian often think with himself, who hath plac'd me here; whether I am in a higher sphere, or in a lower? not chance or fortune, (as the pur-blinde Heathens imagined;) no, it is the wise God that hath by his providence fixed me in this Orbe: We must act that scene which God will have us; say not, Such a one hath occasioned this to me; look not too much at the under-wheele. We read in *Ezekiel* of *a wheel within a wheel**; Gods *Decree* is the cause of the turning of the wheeles, and his *Providence* is the inner wheele that moves all the rest. Gods Providence is that πηδάλιον or helme, which turnes about the whole ship of the Universe. Say then as holy *David*; I *was silent* *; *because thou Lord, didst it* *. Gods Providence (which is nothing else but the carrying on

* Ezek. 1. 16.

נאלמתי * Psal. 39. 9.

of

of his Decree,) ſhould be a *ſuperſedeas* and counterpoiſon againſt diſcontent; God hath ſet us in our ſtation, and he hath done it in wiſdome.

We fancy ſuch a condition of life good for us, whereas if we were our own carvers, we ſhould often cut the * worſt piece. *Lot* being put to his choice, did chooſe *Sodom* *, which ſoon after was burnt with fire. *Rachel* was very deſirous of children, *Give me children or I dye* *; and it coſt her her life in bringing forth a childe. *Abraham* was earneſt for *Iſhmael*, *O that Iſhmael may live before thee* *! but he had little comfort either of him or his ſeed; he was borne a ſon of ſtrife, *His hand was againſt every man, and every mans hand againſt him.* The Diſciples wept for Chriſt's leaving the world; they choſe his corporal preſence, whereas it was beſt for them that Chriſt ſhould

* *Iſta eligimus quæ plus nocent quàm placent.*

* Gen. 13. 10.

* Gen. 30. 1

* Gen. 17. 18

should be gone, for else *the Com-*
*Joh. 16. 7 *forter would not come* *. *David*
chose the life of his childe, *he wept*
* 2 Sam. 12. 16. *and fasted for it* *; whereas if the
childe had lived, it would have
been a perpetual monument of his
shame. We stand oft in our own
light; if we should sort, or parcell
out our own comforts, we should
hit upon the wrong. It is not well
for the childe, that the Parent doth
chuse for it: were it left to its self, it
would perhaps chuse a knife to cut
its own fingers. A man in a paro-
xysme calls for wine, which if he
had, it were little better than poyson:
'tis well for the Patient, that he is at
the Physicians appointment.

The consideration of a Decree de-
termining, and a Providence dispo-
sing all things that fall out, should
work our hearts to holy Content-
ment. The wise God hath order-
ed our condition: if he sees it better
for us to abound, we shall abound;

if

if he ſees it better for us to want, we ſhall want; be content to be at Gods diſpoſe.

God ſees in his infinite wiſdom, the ſame condition is not *convenient* for all; that which is good for one, may be bad for another: one ſeaſon of weather will not ſerve all mens occaſions; one needs *Sunſhine*, another *Raine*: one condition of life will not fit every man, no more than one ſuit of apparel will fit every body: Proſperity is not fit for all, nor yet Adverſity. If one man be brought low, perhaps he can bear it better; he hath a greater ſtock of grace, more faith and patience; he can *gather grapes of thornes*, pick ſome comfort out of the Croſſe; every one cannot do this. Another man is ſeated in an eminent place of dignity; he is fitter for it: perhaps it is a place requires more parts, and judgement, which every one is not capable of*; perhaps he can uſe his eſtate better; he

* *Ex omni ligno non fit Mercurius.*

he hath a publick *heart* as well as a publick *place*. The wise God sees that condition to be bad for one which is good for another; hence it is he placeth men in different orbes and spheres; some higher, some lower: one man desires *health*; God sees sickness better for him; God will worke health out of sickness, by bringing the *body of death* into a consumption. Another man desires *liberty*; God sees restraint better for him; he will work his liberty by restraint; when his feet are bound, his heart shall be most enlarged. Did we beleeve this, it would give check to the sinful disputes, and cavils of our hearts; shall I be discontented at that which is enacted by a Decree, and Ordered by a Providence? is this to be a childe, or a rebel?

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

USE I.

Shewing how a Christian may make his life comfortable.

Use I. IT shews us how a Christian may come to lead a comfortable life, even an heaven upon earth, be the times what they will; *viz.* by *Christian Contentment* *; the comfort of life doth not stand ἐν τῷ περισσεύειν in having much; its Christs maxime, *Mans life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he doth possesse* *; but it is in being contented*. Is not the Bee as well contented with feeding on the dew, or

Use I. Inform.

Prov. 15. 13.

*Luke 12. 15.

* *Nullæ profectò majores sunt divitiæ, quàm suâ sorte contentum esse; hæc enim virtus efficit, ut id quod habet aliquis, sit ei satis, summque animum in paupertate reddet divitem.* Hyperius.

ſucking from a flower, as the Oxe that grazeth on the mountaines? Contentment lies within a man, *in the heart*: and the way to be comfortable, is not by having our barnes filled, but our minde quiet. The contented man (ſaith *Seneca*) is the happy man; diſcontent is a fretting humor, which dries the braines, waſtes the ſpirits, corrodes and eates out the comfort of life: Diſcontent makes a man that he doth not *enjoy* what he doth *poſſeſs*. A drop or two of vinegar will ſowre a whole glaſſe of wine. Let a man have the affluence and confluence of worldly comforts, a drop or two of diſcontent will imbitter and poyſon all. *Comfort* depends upon *Contentment*; *Jacob* went halting when the ſinew upon the hollow of his thigh ſhrank: ſo when the ſinew of Contentment begins to ſhrink, we go halting in our comforts. Contentation is as neceſſary to keep the life com-

comfortable, as oyle is neceſſary to keep the lamp burning; the clouds of diſcontent do often drop the ſhowrs of tears. Would we have comfort in our lives? we may have it if we will*. A Chriſtian may carve out what condition he will to himſelf*. Why doſt thou complain of thy troubles? it is not trouble that troubles, but diſcontent; it is not the water without the ſhip, but the water that gets within the leak which drowns it; it is not outward affliction that can make the life of a Chriſtian ſad; a contented mind would ſail above theſe waters: but when there's a leak of diſcontent open, & trouble gets into the heart, then it is diſquieted and ſinks. Do therefore as the Marriners, pump the water out, and ſtop this ſpiritual leak in thy ſoul, and no trouble can hurt thee.

* *Quiſque eſt fortunæ ſuæ faber.*
* *Quid votis opus eſt fac te ipſe fœlicem.* Seneca.

CHAP. IX.

Use II.

A check to the discontented Christian.

Reproof. *Use* II. HEre is a just Reproof to such as are discontented with their condition. This disease is almost Epidemical. * Some not content with their callings which God hath set them in, must be a step higher, from the *plough* to the *throne*; who like the *spider* in the *Proverbs* will *take hold with their hands and be in Kings Palaces*, Prov. 30 28. others from the *Shop* to the *Pulpit* *; they would be in the Temple of *Honour*, before they are in the Temple of *Vertue*; who step into *Moses* chair,

* *Quis est tam compositæ felicitatis, ut non aliquâ ex parte cum statûs sui qualitate vixerit?* Boëtius *de Consol.* Phylos. lib. 2.

* Num. 12. 2.

chaire, without *Aaron's* Bells and Pomegranates; like Apes, which do most shew their deformity when they are climbing. Is it not enough that God hath bestowed gifts upon men, in private to edifie, that he hath enriched them with many mercies; but, *seek they the Priest-hood also* *? What is this but discontent arising from high-flown pride? These do secretly taxe the Wisdome of God, that he hath not screwed them up in their condition a peg higher. *Tentat Superbia, ut frangat.* Every man is complaining that his estate is no better, though he seldome complaines that his heart is no better. *Suæ quemque conditionis pœnitet*: one man commends this kinde of life, another commends that *; one man thinks a Countrey-life best, another a City-life, as the Poet elegantly expresseth it.

* Numb. 16. 9.

Aug.

Hic utraque circumfluus vitam cœlibem deflet, ille nuptiis fœlix, orbus liberis alieno consum neutrit hæredi; alius prole lætatus, filii delictis mæstus illachrymat. Poëtius.

O fortunati mercatores, gravis annis
Miles ait, multo jam fractus membra labore;
Contrà Mercator, navim jactantibus austris,
Militia est potior; quid enim? concurritur; horæ
Momento cita mors venit, aut victoria læta. Horat.

The Souldier thinks it beſt to be a Merchant; and the Merchant to be a Souldier. Men can be content to be any thing but what God will have them. We may cry out with the ſame Poet,

Quî fit, Mecænas, ut nemo quam ſibi ſortem
Seu ratio dederit, ſeu fors objecerit, illâ
Contentus vivat? laudet diverſa ſequentes? Hor. 1. Satyr.

How is it that no man is contented? Very few Chriſtians have learned Saint

Saint *Paul's* leſſon; neither poor nor rich know how to be content, they can learn any thing but this.

1. If men are poore, they learn to be, 1. *Envious*: they maligne thoſe that are above them. Anothers proſperity is an ey-ſore. When Gods candle ſhines upon their neighbours Tabernacle, this light offends them. In the midſt of wants men can (in this ſenſe) abound; *viz.* in envy and malice: An *envious* eye is an evil eye. 2. They learn to be *querulous*, ſtill complaining, as if God had dealt hardly with them; they are ever telling of their wants, they want this and that comfort; whereas their greateſt want is a contented ſpirit. Thoſe that are well enough content with their *ſinnes*, yet are not content with their *condition*.

2. If men are rich, they learn to be *covetous*; thirſting inſatiably after the world, and by any unjuſt

means ſcraping it together; *their right hand is full of bribes*, as the Pſalmiſt expreſſeth it*. Put a good cauſe in one ſcale, & a piece of Gold in the other, and the Gold weighs heavieſt. There are (ſaith *Solomon*) four things that ſay, *It is not enough**. I may adde a fifth, *viz.* the *heart of a covetous man*. So that neither poor nor rich know how to be content.

*Pſ 26. 10

*Prov. 30. 15.

Never certainly ſince the Creation did this ſin of diſcontent *reign* or rather *rage* more than in our times; never was God more diſhonored; you can hardly ſpeak with any, but the paſſion of his tongue betrays the diſcontent of his heart: every one liſps out his trouble, and here even the ſtammering tongue ſpeaks too freely and fluently.

If we have not what we deſire, God ſhall not have a good look from us, but preſently we are ſick of diſcontent; and ready to die out of an humour. If God will not give the people

people of Iſrael for their luſts, they bid him take their lives; they muſt have Quailes to their Manna. *Ahab* though a King (and one would think his Crown-lands had been ſufficient for him, yet) is ſullen and diſcontented for want of *Naboths* Vineyard. *Jonah* though a good man and a Prophet, yet ready to die *in a pet* *; and becauſe God kill'd his Gourd, kill me too, ſaith he. *Rachel*, *Give me children, or I die*; ſhe had many bleſſings, if ſhe could have ſeen them, but wanted this of *contentation*. God will *ſupply our wants*, but muſt he ſatisfie our *luſts* too? Many are diſcontented for a very trifle; another hath a better dreſſe, a richer jewel, a newer faſhion. *Nero* not content with his *Empire*, was troubled that the Muſicians had more skill in playing than he: how phantaſtick are ſome, that pine away in diſcontent for the want of thoſe things, which if they had, would

* Jonah 4. 8.

would but render them more ridiculous.

CHAP. X.

USE III.

A ſwaſive to Contentment.

Uſe III. Exhortation.

Uſe III. IT exhorts us to labour for Contentation; this is that which doth beautifie and beſpangle a Chriſtian, and as a *ſpiritual embroidery* doth ſet him off in the eyes of the world.

Objection

But methinks I hear ſome bitterly complaining, and ſaying to me, Alas, how is it poſſible to be contented; the Lord *hath made my chaine heavy**, he hath caſt me into a very ſad condition. Ἀλλά μοι Αἰγίοχος κρατερόφρων Ζεὺς ἄλγε' ἔδωκεν.

*Lam. 3. 7

Homer. Iliad 2.

Ὡς μὲ μάλ' ἀπρήκτους ἔριδας καὶ νείκεα βάλλει.

Anſw.

Anſw. There is no ſinne, but labours

labours either to hide it ſelf under ſome maske: or if it cannot be concealed, then to vindicate it ſelfe by ſome Apology. This ſin of diſcontent I finde very witty in its Apologies, which I ſhall firſt diſcover and then make a Reply. We muſt lay it down for a Rule, that diſcontent is a *ſinne*, ſo that all the pretences and Apologies wherewith it labours to juſtifie it ſelfe, are but the painting and dreſſing of a ſtrumpet.

SECT. I.

The firſt Apology that Diſcontent makes, Anſwered.

The firſt Apology which diſcontent makes is this; I have loſt a childe. *Paulina* upon the loſſe of her children, was ſo poſſeſſed with a ſpirit of ſadneſſe, that ſhe had like to have intombed her ſelf in her own diſ- 1. *Apology.*

discontent; our love to *Relation* is oftentimes more than our love to *Religion.*

1. *Reply* *Anſ.* 1. We muſt be content, not only when God gives mercies, but when he taketh them away. If we muſt *in every thing* give thanks, * 1 Thes. 5 18. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 18. then *in nothing* be diſcontented.

2. *Reply* 2. Perhaps God hath taken away the *Ciſtern*, that he may give you the more of the *Spring*; he hath darkened the Star-light, that you may have more Sun-light. God intends you ſhall have more of himſelf, and is not he better than *ten Sons?* Look not ſo much upon a temporal loſſe, as a ſpiritual gain; the comforts of the world *runne dregges*; thoſe which come out of the Granary of the Promiſe, are purer and ſweeter.

3. *Reply* 3. Your childe was not given, but lent. I have, ſaith *Hanna*, *lent my* * 1 Sam. 1 21. *ſon to the Lord* *, She lent him: the Lord

Lord had but lent him to her. Mercies are not entailed upon us, but lent; what a man lends, he may call for againe when he pleaſe. God hath put out a child to thee a while to nurſe; wilt thou be diſpleaſed if he takes his childe home againe? O be not diſcontented, that a mercy is taken away from you; but rather be thankful, that it was lent you ſo long.

4. Suppoſe your childe be taken from you, either he was good or bad; if he was *Rebellious*, you have not ſo much parted with a childe, as a burden; you grieve for that which might have been a greater grief to you: if he was *Religious*, then remember, he is taken *from the evil to come**, & plac'd in his centre of felicity. This lower Region is full of groſſe and hurtful vapours; how happy are thoſe who are mounted into the celeſtial Orbes! The righteous *is taken away*; in the Original

4 *Reply*

* Iſa. 57. 1.

נאסף ginal it is, he is *gathered* * ; a wicked childe dying is cut off, but the pious childe is gathered. Even as we see men gather flowers, and candy them, and preserve them by them ; so hath God gathered thy child as a sweet flower, that he may candy it with glory, and preserve it by him for ever. Why then should a Christian be discontented ; why should he weep excessively ? *Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me ; but weep for your selves* *. So, could we hear our children speaking to us out of heaven; they would say, Weep not for us who are happy, we lye upon a soft pillow, even in the bosome of Christ ; *the Prince of Peace* is embracing us and kissing us with the kisses of his lips, be not troubled at our preferment ; *Weep not for us*, but weep for your selves, who are in a sinful sorrowful world: you are in the *valley of teares*, but we are on the *mountaines of spices* ; we are gotten

* Luk. 23. 28.

gotten to our harbour, but you are ſtill toſſing upon the waves of inconſtancy. O Chriſtian, be not *diſcontented* that thou haſt parted with ſuch a childe; but rather rejoyce that thou had'ſt ſuch a childe to part with, Break forth into thankfulneſs. What an honour is it to a Parent to beget ſuch a childe, that while he lives encreaſeth the *joy* of the glorified Angels *; and when he dies, encreaſeth the *number* of the glorified Saints?

* Luk. 15 10. *Lachrymæ pœnitentiæ ſunt vinũ Angelorũ.* Bern. *ſerm.* 30. *ſup r Cant.*

5. If God hath taken away one of your children, he hath left you more, he might have ſtripped you of all. He tooke away all *Jobs* comforts, his *eſtate*, his *children*; and indeed his wife was left, but as a croſſe. Satan made a bow of this rib (as *Chryſoſtom* ſpeaks) and ſhot a tentation by her at *Job*, thinking to have ſhot him to the heart; *Curſe God and die*: but *Job* had upon him the breſt-plate of *Integritie*; and though his children were taken away, yet not his

5. *Reply*

graces,

graces; ſtill he is content, ſtill he bleſſeth God. O think how many mercies you ſtill enjoy; yet our baſe hearts are more diſcontented at one loſſe, then thankful for an hundred mercies.

God hath plucked one bunch of Grapes from you; but how many precious Cluſters are left behind?

Object. *Object.* But it was my only childe, the ſtaffe of my age, the ſeed of my comfort, and the only bloſſome, out of which the honour of an ancient family did grow.

Anſw. 1 *Anſw.* 1. God hath promiſed you (if you belong to him) a name *better* *Iſa. 56. 5. *than of ſons and daughters* *; Is he dead that ſhould have been the monument to have kept up the name of a Family? God hath given you *a new name*, he hath written your name in the book of Life; behold, your ſpiritual Heraldry; here is a name that cannot be cut off.

2. Hath

2. Hath God taken away thy *only childe*? he hath given thee his *only Son*: this is a happy exchange. What needs he complaine of losses that hath Christ? he is his Fathers *brightneſs* *, his *riches* *, his *delight* *. Is there enough in Christ to delight the heart of God? and is there not enough in him to raviſh us with holy delight? He is *wiſdome* to teach us, *righteouſneſſe* to acquit us, *ſanctification* to adorn us, he is δῶρον βασιλικὸν, that Royal and Princely gift; he is *the bread of Angels* *, the joy and triumph of Saints, he is τὰ πάντα καὶ ἐν πᾶσι, *all in all* *; why then art thou diſcontented? though thy childe be loſt, yet thou haſt him for whom all things are loſſe.

* Heb. 1 3.
* Col. 2. 9.
* Pſal. 42. 1
* *Chriſtus panis angelorum.* Bern.
* Col. 3. 10

7. And laſtly, let us bluſh to think that nature ſhould ſeem to out-ſtrip grace. *Pulvillus* an Heathen, when he was about to conſecrate a Temple to *Jupiter*, and news was brought to him of the death of

7. *Reply* Pet. Matt.

his ſonne, would not deſiſt from his enterprize, but with much compoſure of minde gave order for decent burial.

SECT. II.

The ſecond Apology *anſwered.*

2. *Apology.* 2. Apology that diſcontent makes is, I have a great part of my eſtate ſtrangely melted away, and trading begins to fail.

God is pleaſed ſometimes to bring his children very low, and cut them ſhort in their eſtate; it fares with them as with that widow who had nothing in her houſe ſave *a pot of oyle* *; but be content.

*2 King. 4. 2.

1. *Reply.* 1. God hath taken away your *Eſtate*, but not your *Portion*. This is a ſacred Paradox. Honour and Eſtate are no part of a Chriſtians Joynture, they are rather *acceſſaries* than *eſſentials*; and are extrinſecal and

and forraigne; therefore the loſſe of theſe cannot denominate a man miſerable; ſtill the portion remains; *The Lord is my portion, ſaith my ſoul**. Suppoſe one were worth a million of money, and he ſhould chance to loſe a pin off his ſleeve; this is no part of his eſtate, nor can we ſay he is undone: the loſſe of ſublunary comforts is not ſo much to a Chriſtians portion, as the loſſe of a pin is to a million. *Theſe things ſhall be added to you** ; *Adjicientur*, they ſhall be caſt in as overplus: when a man buyes a piece of cloth, he hath an inch or two given in to the meaſure; now though he loſe his inch of cloth, yet he is not undone: for ſtill the whole piece remaines: our outward eſtate is not ſo much in regard of the *portion*, as an inch of cloth is to the whole piece; why then ſhould a Chriſtian be diſcontented when the title to his ſpiritual treaſure remains? a thief may take away all my money

* Lam. 3. 24.

* Mat. 6. 32.

that I have about me, but not my land; ſtill a Chriſtian hath a title to the *land of promiſe*. *Mary* hath choſen the better part, *which ſhall not be taken from her.*

2. *Reply* *Peccuntam perdidiſti, fortaſſis illa te perderet, manens*

2. Perhaps if thy eſtate had not been loſt, thy ſoul had been loſt *; outward comforts do often quench inward heat. God cannot beſtow a jewel upon us, but we fall ſo in love with it, that we forget him that gave it; what pitie is it that we ſhould commit idolatry with the creature! God is forc'd ſometimes to drain away an eſtate; the plate and jewels are often caſt over-board to ſave the paſſenger. Many a man may curſe the time that ever he had ſuch an eſtate, it hath been an *enchantment* to draw away his heart from God. Some there are that *will be rich* *, and they fall into a *ſnare* *. Art thou trou-

*1 Tim. 6. 9

* *Aliud eſt eſſe divitem, aliud velle fieri divitem: hîc cupiditas accuſatur, non aurum.* Bede.

bled

bled that God hath prevented a ſnare? Riches are *Thornes* *: art thou angry that God hath pull'd away a thorne from thee? Riches are compar'd to *thick clay* *: Perhaps thy affections, which are *the feet of the ſoul*, might have ſtuck ſo faſt in this golden clay, that they could not have aſcended up to heaven; *be content*; if God damne up our outward comforts, it is that the ſtream of our love may runne faſter another way.

* Mat. 13. 7 *Spinæ ſuffocantes & pungentes.*

* Hab. 2. 6.

3. If your eſtate be ſmall, yet God can bleſſe a little. 'Tis not how much *money* we have, but how much *bleſſing*. He that often curſeth the bags of gold *, can bleſſe the *meale in the barrel*, and the *oyle in the cruſe*. What if thou haſt not the full fleſh-pots? yet thou haſt a promiſe, *I will bleſſe her proviſion** , and then a little goes a great way; be content, thou haſt the dew of a bleſſing diſtill'd: *a dinner of green herbs*, where love

3. *Reply*

* *Ex male quæſitis vix gaudet tertius hæres.*

* Pſal. 132. 15.

is ſweet; I may adde, where the love of God is: another may have more eſtate than you, but more care; more riches, leſſe reſt: more revenewes, but withal more occaſions of expence: he hath a greater inheritance, yet perhaps God doth not give him *power to eat thereof* *, he hath the *dominion* of his eſtate, not the *uſe*; he holds more, but enjoyes leſſe: in a word, thou haſt leſſe gold than he, perhaps leſſe guilt *.

*Eccl. 6. 2. Λεπτῶς καλῶς ζῆν χρῆσον ἢ λαμπρῶς κακῶς. Menand.

* *Lucrum in arca, damnum in Conſcientia.* Aug. in Serm. Innocent.

4. *Reply* 4. You did never ſo thrive in your ſpiritual trade; your heart was never ſo low as ſince your condition was low; you were never *ſo poor in ſpirit*, never *ſo rich in faith*. You did never runne the waies of Gods *Commandments* ſo faſt as ſince ſome of your golden weights were taken off. You never had ſuch trading for heaven all your life*; this is *uber-*

* *Felix mutatio ubi Deum pro mundo accipimus, pro terra cælum.*

rimus

rimus queſtus. You did never make ſuch adventures upon the promiſe as ſince you left off your Sea-adventures. This is the beſt kinde of merchandize; O Chriſtian, thou never had'ſt ſuch incomes of the Spirit, ſuch ſpring-tydes of joy; and what though weak in eſtate, if ſtrong in aſſurance? be content, what you have loſt one way, you have gain'd another.

5. Be your loſſes what they will in this kinde, remember in every loſſe there is only a *ſuffering*, but in every diſcontent there is a *ſinne*, and one ſin is worſe than a thouſand ſufferings. What? becauſe ſome of my *revenews* are gone, ſhall I part with ſome of my *righteouſneſſe*? ſhall my faith and patience go too? becauſe I do not poſſeſſe an eſtate, ſhall I not therefore poſſeſſe my own ſpirit? O learn to be content. 5. *Reply.*

SECT. III.

The third Apology answered.

3. *Apology* The third Apology is, It is sad with me in my relations; where I should finde most comfort, there I have most grief. This Apology or Objection brancheth it self into two particulars, whereto I shall give a distinct Reply.

1. *Branch.* 1. My child goes on in rebellion; I fear I have brought forth a child for

Reply. the Devil. It is indeed sad to think that hell should be paved with the skulls of any of our children: and certainly the *pangs of grief* which the mother hath in this kinde are worse than *her pangs of travel*; but though you ought to be humbled, yet not discontented: for consider

1. *Reply* 1. You may pick something out of your childes undutifulnesse; the childes

childes ſinne is ſometimes the Parents Sermon: *quod dolet, docet*: the undutifulneſſe of children to us may be a *memento* to put us in minde of our *undutifulneſſe once* to God. Time was when *we* were rebellious children; how long did our hearts ſtand ont as garriſons againſt God? how long did he parly with us, and beſeech us, ere we would yield? he walked in the tenderneſs of his heart towards us, but we walked in the frowardneſſe of our hearts towards him; and ſince grace hath been planted in our ſouls, how much of the wilde Olive is ſtill in us? how many motions of the Spirit do we daily reſiſt? how many unkindneſſes and affronts have we put upon Chriſt? Let this open a ſpring of repentance; look upon your childes rebellion, and mourne for your own rebellion.

2. Though to ſee him undutiful is your *griefe*, yet not alwaies your *ſinne* 2. *Reply*

sinne. Hath a Parent given the childe, not only the milke of the breſt, but *the ſincere milke of the word** ? Haſt thou ſeaſoned his
*1 Pet. 2. 2. tender yeares with Religious education? thou canſt do no more; Parents can only work knowledge, God muſt work grace; they can only lay the wood together, it is God muſt make it burne; a Parent can only be a guide to ſhew his childe the way to heaven; the Spirit of God muſt be a load-ſtone to draw his heart into that way. *Am I in Gods ſtead* (ſaith *Jacob*) *who hath withheld the fruit of the womb** ? can
* Gen. 30. 2 I give children? So, is a Parent in Gods ſtead to give grace? Who can help it, if a childe having the light of conſcience, Scripture, education, theſe three Torches in his hand, yet runs wilfully into the deep ponds of ſin? Weep for thy childe, pray for him, but do not ſin for him, *by diſcontent*.

3. Say

3. Say not, you have brought forth a childe for the Devil; God can reduce him; He hath promiſed to *turne the heart of the children to their Parents* *, and to open ſprings of grace in the *Deſert* *; When thy childe is going full-ſaile to the Devil, God can blow with a contrary wind of his Spirit, and alter his courſe. When *Paul* was breathing out perſecution againſt the Saints, and was ſailing hell-ward, God turns him another way; before he was going to *Damaſcus*, God ſends him to *Ananias*; before a Perſecutor, now a Preacher. Though our children are for the preſent fallen into the *Devils pound*, God can turne them from the power of Satan *, and bring them in at the *twelfth* houre. *Monica* was weeping for her ſon *Auguſtine*: at laſt God gave him in upon prayer, and he became a famous inſtrument in the Church of God.

3. *Reply.*

* Mal. 4. 6.
* Iſa. 35. 6.

* Act. 26. 18.

2. The

2. *Branch.* 2. The second branch of the objection is; But, my husband takes ill courses; where I looked for honey, behold a sting.

Answ: 'Tis sad to have the living and the dead tied together; yet, let not your heart fret with discontent; mourne for his sinne, but do not murmur. For,

1. *Reply* 1. God hath placed you in your relation, and you cannot be discontented, but you quarrel with God. What? for every crosse that befalls us, shall we call the infinite wisdom of God in question? O the blasphemy of our hearts!

2. *Reply* 2. God can make you a gainer by your husbands sinne; perhaps you had never been so good, if he had not been so bad. The fire burnes hotest in the coldest climate: God often by a divine *Antiperistasis* turnes the sinnes of others to our good *. and makes our *maladies* our *medicines*. The more profane the hus-

* *Etiam peccatum ipsum in bonum convertit.* Aug. *in* Rom. 8

husband is, oft the more holy the wife growes; the more earthly he is, the more heavenly ſhe growes; God makes ſometimes the husbands ſin a ſpur to the wives grace. His exorbitances are *quaſi flabellum*, as a paire of bellowes to blow up the flame of her zeale and devotion the more.

Is it not thus? doth not thy husbands wickedneſſe ſend thee to prayer? Thou perhaps hadſt never prayed ſo much, if he had not ſinn'd ſo much: his deadneſſe quickens thee the more; the ſtone of his heart is an hammer to break thy heart. The Apoſtle ſaith; *The unbelieving wife is ſanctified by the believing husband**; but in this ſenſe, the believing wife is ſanctified by the unbelieving husband, ſhe grows better; his ſin is a whetſtone to her grace, and a *medicine* for her ſecurity.

* 1 Cor. 7. 14.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

The fourth Apology *answered.*

4. *Apology.* The next Apology that discontent makes, is, But my friends have dealt very unkindly with me, and proved false.

Answ. 'Tis sad when a friend proves like a *Brooke in Summer* *; The Traveller being parched with heat, comes to the brooke, hoping to refresh himselfe; but the brook is dryed up: yet be content.

* Job. 6. 15

1. *Reply* 1. Thou are not alone, others of the Saints have been betraied by friends; and when they have leaned upon them, they have been as a *foot out of joynt.* This was true in the Type, *David* *; *It was not an enemy reproached me, but it was thou, a man, my equal, my guide and my acquaintance; we took sweet counsel together;* and in the Antitype Christ, he

* Psal. 55. 12, 13.

he was betrayed by a friend; and why ſhould we think it ſtrange to have the ſame meaſure dealt out to us as Jeſus Chriſt had? *The ſervant is not above his Maſter.*

2. A Chriſtian may often read his ſin in his puniſhment; Hath not he dealt treacherouſly with God? how oft hath he grieved the Comforter, broken his vowes? and through unbelief ſided with Satan againſt God? How oft hath he abuſed love? taking the Jewels of Gods mercies, and making a golden calfe of them, ſerving his own luſts? how oft hath he made the free-grace of God, which ſhould have been a bolt to keep our ſin, rather a key to open the door to it? theſe wounds hath the Lord received *in the houſe of his friend* *. Look upon the unkindneſſe of thy friend, and mourne for thy own unkindneſſe againſt God; ſhall a Chriſtian condemn that in another, which he hath been too guilty of himſelf? 3. Hath

2. *Reply*

* Zach. 13 6

3. *Reply* 3. Hath thy friend proved treacherous? perhaps you did repose too much confidence in him. If you lay more weight upon an house than the pillars will bear, it must needs break. God saith, *Trust ye not in a* *Mica.7.5. *friend* *; perhaps you did put more trust in him, then you did dare to put in God. Friends are as *Venice-glasses*; we may use them; but if we lean too hard upon them, they will break: Behold matter of humility, but not of sullenness and discontent.

4. *Reply* 4. You have a friend in heaven will never faile you; *There is a friend* Pro.18.14 (saith *Solomon*) *that sticketh closer than a brother.* Such a friend is God; he is very studious and inquisitive in our behalfe; he hath a debating with himself, a consulting and projecting how he may do us good; he is the *best friend*, which may give contentment in the midst of all discourtesies of friends.

Con-

Consider, 1. He is a *loving friend.* God is love*, hence he is said sometimes to engrave us on the *Palmes of his hand*, Isa. 49. 16. that we may be never out of his eye, and to carry us *in his bosome*, Isa. 40. 11. near to his heart. There is no stop or stint in his love; but as the River *Nilus*, it overflows all the banks: his love is as far *beyond* our thoughts, as it is *above* our deserts. O the infinite love of God, in giving the Son of his love to be made *flesh**, which was more than if all the Angels had been made *wormes*! God in giving Christ to us, gave his very heart to us; here is love pensil'd out in all its glory, and engraven as with the *point of a Diamond*. All other love is hatred in comparison of the love of our friend.

* 1 John 4. 16. Isa. 49. 16. Isa. 40. 11.

* *Quantus Deus quantillus factus est homo?* Aug.

2. He is a *careful* friend; *He careth for you**.

* 1 Pet. 5. 7.

1. He minds and transacts our business as his own, he accounts his

peoples interests and concernments as his interest.

2. He provides for us, Grace to enrich us, Glory to ennoble us; It was *Davids* complaint, *No man cared* *Pſ.142.4 *for my ſoul**; a Chriſtian hath a friend that cares for him.

*Dan.2.20 3. He is a *Prudent* friend *. A friend may ſometimes erre through ignorance or miſtake, and give his friend poyſon inſtead of ſugar; but *God is wiſe in heart* *. He is skilful * Job 9.4. as well as faithful; he knows what our diſeaſe is, and what Phyſick is moſt proper to apply; he knows what will do us good, and what wind will be beſt to carry us to heaven.

* Deut. 7. 9, 10. 4. He is a *Faithful* friend *; and he is faithful, 1. In his promiſes, *In hope of eternal life, which God that* * Tit. 1.2. *cannot lie hath promiſed** . Gods * Iſa.63.8. people are *children that will not lye** ; but God is a God that *cannot* lie; he will not deceive the faith of his people;

people; nay, he cannot: he is called ἡ ἀλήθεια, *the truth*; he can as well ceaſe to be God, as ceaſe to be true. The Lord may ſometimes *change* his promiſe, (as when he converts a temporal promiſe into a ſpiritual;) but he can never *break* his promiſe.

5. He is a *Compaſſionate Friend.* Hence in Scripture we read of *the yearnings of his bowels**, Gods friendſhip is nothing elſe but compaſſion; for there is naturally no *affection* in us to deſire his friendſhip, nor no *goodneſſe* in us to deſerve it; the load-ſtone is in himſelfe. When we were full of *blood*, he was full of *bowels*; When we were enemyes, he ſent an Embaſſage of peace; When our hearts were turned back from God, his heart was turned towards us. O the tenderneſſe and ſympathy of our friend in heaven! We our ſelves have ſome relentings of heart to thoſe which are in miſery,

*Jer. 31. 20

but it is God who begets all the mercies and bowels that are in us, therefore he is call'd *the Father of mercies**.

*2 Cor. 1. 3

6. He is a *constant friend. His compassions faile not* *. Friends do often in adversity drop off as leaves in Autumne *. *Amici circa fortaginem*, as *Plutarch* saith; these are rather flatterers than friends. *Joab* was for a time faithful to King *Davids* house, he went not after *Absaloms* Treason, but within a while proved false to the Crown, and went after the treason of *Adonijah* *; God is a friend for ever. *Having loved his own, he loved them to the end* *. What though I am despised? yet God loves me: What though my friends cast me off? yet God loves me: he loves εἰς τέλος, to the end, and there is no end of that love.

* Lam. 3. 22.

* Dum fueris felix, multos numerabis amicos. Nubila si fuerint tempora, solus eris.

* 1 King. 1.

* εἰς τέλος ἠγάπησεν. Joh. 13. 1.

This methinks, in case of discourtesies, and unkindnesses, is enough to charm down discontent.

Sect.

SECT. V.

The fifth Apology answered.

The next Apologe is, I am under great reproaches *. Let not this discontent; For, 5. *Apology.* * *Deteriores sunt qui famam corrumpunt quàm qui prælia diripiunt.* Greg.

1. It is a signe there is some good in thee; *Quid mali feci?* saith *Socrates*; what evil have I done, that this bad man commends me? The *applause* of the wicked usually denotes some evil, and their *censure* imports some good *. *David* wept and fasted, & that was *turned to his reproach**; as we must passe to heaven through the *pikes* of suffering, so through the clouds of Reproach. 1. *Reply* * Ps. 38. 20 * Ps. 69. 10

2. If your reproach be for God, as *Davids* was, *For thy sake I have born reproach* *; then it is rather matter of *triumph* than dejection: Christ doth not say, when you are 2. *Reply* * Ps. 69. 7.

reproached, *be discontented*; but
*Mat. 5. 12 χαίρετε, *Rejoyce* *. Wear your Reproach as a Diadem of honour, for now *a Spirit of glory rests upon*
*1 Pet. 4. 14 *you* *. Put your reproaches into the inventory of your riches; so did
* Heb. 11. 26. *Moses* *. It should be a Christians ambition to wear his Saviours livery though it be sprinkled with blood, and sullied with disgrace.

3. *Reply* 3. God will do us *good* by re-
* *Boni per contumelias meliores existunt.* Gregor. *in* Hom. proach*; as *David* said of *Shimei* his cursing, *It may be the Lord will requite good for his cursing this day**; this puts us upon searching out sinne. A
*2 Sam. 16 12 child of God labours to read his sin
* *Detractione patientia nostra probatur.* Aug. *lib.* 3. *contra Petil.* in every stone of reproach that is cast at him; besides, now we have an opportunity to exercise patience and humility *.

4. *Reply* 4. Jesus Christ was content to be reproached for us; *He despised the shame of the Crosse* *. It may amaze
*Heb. 11. 2 us to think, that he who was God could endure to be spit upon, to be crowned

crowned with thornes, *in a kind of jeere*; and when he was ready to *bow* his head upon the Croſſe, to have the Jewes in ſcorne *wag* their heads and ſay, *He ſaved others, himſelfe he cannot ſave.* The *ſhame* of the Croſſe was as much as the *blood* of the Croſſe; His *Name* was crucified before his *Body.* The ſharp arrows of *Reproach* that the world did ſhoot at Chriſt, went deeper into his heart than the ſpear; His ſuffering was ſo ignominious, that as if the Sunne did bluſh to behold, it withdrew its bright beams, and maſqued it ſelfe with a cloud; (and well it might, when the Sun of righteouſneſſe was in an eclipſe;) all this contumely and reproach did the God of glory *endure*, or rather *deſpiſe* for us. Oh then, let us be content to have our names eclipſed for Chriſt; let not reproach lie at our heart, but let us binde it as a crown about our head. Alas, what is reproach? this

is

is but *small shot*, how will men stand in the mouth of the Canon? those who are discontented at a reproach, will be offended at a faggot.

5. *Reply* 5. Is not many a man contented to suffer reproach for maintaining his lust? and shall not we for maintaining the truth? Some *glory in* *Phil. 3. 19 *that which is their shame* *: and shall we be ashamed of that which is our glory? Be not troubled at these pettie things: he whose heart is once divinely touched with the loadstone of Gods Spirit, doth account it his honour to be dishonoured for Christ *; and doth as much despise *Act. 15. 4 the worlds censure, as he doth their praise.

6. *Reply* 6. We live in an Age, wherein men dare reproach God himselfe. The *Divinity* of the Sonne of God is blasphemously reproached by the *Socinian*; The blessed *Bible* is reproach by the *Antiscripturist*, as if it

it were but a *legend of lyes*, and every mans faith a fable; The *Juſtice* of God is called to the barre of Reaſon be the *Arminian*; The *Wiſdome* of God in his providential actings, is taxed by the *Atheiſt*; The *Ordinances* of God are decryed by the *Familiſt*, as being too heavy a burden for a *free-borne* conſcience; and too low, and carnal for a ſublime Seraphick ſpirit; The *wayes* of God which have the Majeſty of holineſſe ſhining in them, are calumniated by the *Profane*; The mouthes of men are open againſt God, as if he were an *hard Maſter*, and the path of Religion too ſtrict and ſevere; If men cannot give God a good word, ſhall we be diſcontented or troubled, that they ſpeak hardly of us? ſuch as labour to bury the glory of Religion, ſhall we wonder that their throats are *open ſepulchres* *, to bury our good name? Oh let us be contented while we are in Gods ſcouring houſe,

* Rom. 3. 13.

to

to have our names ſullied a little; the blacker we ſeem to be here, the brighter ſhall we ſhine when God hath ſet us upon the celeſtial ſhelfe.

SECT. VI.

The ſixth Apology anſwered.

6. Apology. The ſixth Apology that Diſcontent makes, is diſreſpect in the world. I have not that eſteem from men as is ſuitable to my quality and graces. And doth this trouble? Conſider,

1. Reply 1. The world is an unequal Judge; as it is full of *change*, ſo of *partiality*. The world gives her *Reſpects* as ſhe doth her *places of preferment*; more by favour often, than deſert. Haſt thou the ground of real worth in thee? that is beſt Worth that is in him that *hath* it; Honour is in him that *gives* it*: better deſerve reſpect, and

* Honor eſt in bonorante.

and not have it; than have it, and not deserve it.

2. Hast thou grace? God respects thee, and his judgement is best worth prizing. A Beleever is a person of honour, being *borne of God.* Since thou wast *precious* in mine eys, *thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee* *. Let the world think what they will of you; perhaps in their eyes you are a *cast away*: in Gods eyes a *Dove* *, a *Spouse* *, a *Jewel* *: others account you the dregs & offscouring of the world*, but God will give *whole Kingdomes for your ransome**. Let this content; no matter with what oblique eyes I am looked upon in the world, if I am *rectus in curia*, God thinks well of me. 'Tis better that God approve, than man applaud. The world may put us in their *Rubrick*, and God put us in his black-book. What is a man the better that his fellow-prisoners commend him, if his Judge condemne him?

2. *Reply*

* Isa 43.4.
* Cant. 2. 14.
* Cant. 5. 1
* Mal 3. 17
* 1 Cor. 4 14.
* Isa. 43.5.

him? Oh labour to keep in with God, prize his love: let my fellow-subjects frown; I am contented, being a favorite of the King of heaven.

3. *Reply* 3. If we are the children of God, we must look for disrespect; a believer is *in* the world, but not *of* the world: we are here in a pilgrim condition, out of our own Countrey, therefore must not look for the respects & acclamations of the world; it is sufficient that we shall have honour in our own Countrey*; 'Tis dangerous to be the worlds favorite.

*Heb. 13. 14.

4. *Reply* 4. Discontent arising from disrespect, savours too much of pride; an humble Christian hath a lower opinion of himselfe than others can have of him. He that is taken up about the thoughts of his sins, & how he hath provoked God, he cries out as *Agur*, *I am more bruitish than any man**; and therefore is contented, though

*Prov. 30. 2.

though he be set *among the Dogs of the flock* *. Though he be low in the thoughts of others, yet he is thankful, that he is not laid *in the lowest hell* *. A proud man sets an high value upon himself; and is angry with others, because they will not come up to his price. Take heed of pride; O had others a window to look into thy breast, (as *Crates* once expressed it), or did thy heart stand where thy face doth, thou would'st wonder to have so much respect.

* Job 30.1.

*Ps.86.13

SECT. VII.

The seventh Apology *answered.*

The next Apology is, I meet with very great sufferings for the truth*. Consider

7. *Apology*

* *Scala aurea ad exilium, sed circumsepta gladiis.*

1. Your *sufferings* are not so great as your *sinnes*; Put these two in the balance, and see which weighs heaviest

1. *Reply*

vieſt; where ſinne lyes heavy, ſufferings lye light. A carnal ſpirit makes more of his ſufferings, and leſſe of his ſinnes; he looks upon one at the great end of the Perſpective, but upon the other at the little end of the Perſpective. The carnal heart cryes out, Take away the *Frogs*; but a gracious heart cryes, Take away the *iniquity* *. The one ſaith, never any one ſuffered as I have done: but the other ſaith, never any one ſinned as I have done *.

* 2 Sam. 24 10

* Mica. 7. 9

2. *Reply* 2. Art thou under ſufferings? thou haſt an opportunity to ſhew the valour and conſtancy of thy minde; ſome of Gods Saints would have accounted it a great favour to have been honoured with martyrdome. One ſaid, I am in priſon *till* I am in priſon; thou counteſt that a trouble which others would have worne as an enſigne of their glory.

3. *Reply* 3. Even thoſe who have gone onely upon moral principles, have ſhewn

ſhewn much conſtancy and contentment in their ſufferings. *Curtius* being bravely mounted, and in armour, threw himſelfe into a great gulfe, that the City of *Rome* might according to the Oracle be delivered from the Peſtilence; and we having a Divine Oracle, *that they who kill the body cannot hurt the ſoul*, ſhall we not with much conſtancy and patience devote our ſelves to injuries for Religion, and rather ſuffer for the truth, than the truth ſuffer for us? The *Decii* among the Romans vowed themſelves to death, that their legions & ſouldiers might be crowned with the honour of the victory. O what ſhould we be content to ſuffer to make the truth victorious! *Regulus** having ſworne that he would returne to *Carthage* (though he knew there was a furnace heating for him there) yet not daring to infringe his oath, he did adventure to go; we then who are Chriſtians, having made

*Per. Mart.

a vow

a vow to Christ in Baptism, and so oft renewed it in the blessed Sacrament, should with much contentation rather choose to suffer, then violate our sacred oath. Thus the blessed Martyrs, with what courage and chearfulnesse did they yield up their souls to God? and when the fire was set to their bodyes, yet their spirits were not at all fired with passion or discontent. Though others hurt the *body*, let them not the *minde* through discontent; shew by your heroick courage that you are above those troubles which you cannot be without.

SECT. VIII.

The eighth Apology *answered.*

8. *Apology* The next Apology is, The prosperity of the wicked. *Answ.* I confesse 'tis so often, that the evil enjoy all

all the good, and the good endure all the evil. *David*, though a good man, ſtumbled at this, and had like to have fallen *; well, be contented, for remember,

* Pſ. 73.2.

1. Theſe are not the only things, nor the beſt things; they are mercies without the pale; theſe are but acorns with which God feeds ſwine; you who are believers, have more choice fruit, the *Olive*, the *Pomegranate*, the fruit which grows on the *true Vine* Jeſus Chriſt; others have the fat of the earth, you have the dew of heaven; they have a South-land, you have thoſe ſprings of living water which are clarified with Chriſts blood, and indulcorated with his love. 1. *Reply*

2. To ſee the wicked flouriſh is matter rather of *pity* than envy; 'Tis all the heaven they muſt have. *Wo to you rich men, for you have received your conſolation**. Hence it was that *David* made it his ſolemne prayer, *Deliver me from the wicked, from men* 2. *Reply*

* Luk. 6. 24

Pſal. 17. 14.

of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure, Psal. 17. 14. The words (methinks) are *Davids Letany*; from men of the world which have their portion in this life, *good Lord deliver me.* When the wicked have eaten of their dainty dishes, there comes in a sad reckoning which will spoile all. The world is first *musical*, and then *tragical*: if you would have a man fry, and blaze in hell; let him have enough of the *fat of the earth.* O remember, for every sand of mercy that runs out to the wicked, God puts a drop of wrath into his vial. Therefore as that souldier said to his fellow, Do you envy me my grapes? they cost me dear, I must die for them. So I say, Do you envy the wicked? alas, their prosperitie is like *Hamans* banquet before execution. If a man were to be hanged, would one envy to see him walk to the gallows through plea-

pleasant fields and fine galleries, or to see him go up the ladder in cloth of gold? The wicked may flourish in their bravery a while; but, *when they flourish as the grass, it is, that they shall be destroyed for ever**. This proud grasse shall be mowen down. Whatever a sinner enjoyes, he hath a curse with it*; and shall we envy? What if poisoned bread be given to dogs? The long furrowes in the backs of the godly have *a seed of blessing* in them; when the table of the wicked becomes a snare, and their honour their halter.

* Psal. 92. 7

* Mal. 2. 2.

SECT. IX.

The ninth Apology *answered.*

9. The next Apology that discontent makes for it self, is *the evils of the times*. The times are full of Heresie and Impiety, and this is that which troubles me. This Apology

9. Apology

consists of two branches, to which I shall answer in *specie*; and

1 *Branch* The heresie of the times.

1. The times are full of Heresie. This is indeed sad, when the Devil cannot by violence destroy the Church, he endeavours to poison it; when he cannot with *Samsons* Fox-tailes set the corne on fire, then he sowes tares; as he labours to destroy the peace of the Church by *Division*, so the truth of it by *Errour*; we may cry out with *Seneca*, *Verè vivimus in temporum fæcibus*, we live in times wherein there is a sluce open to all novel opinions, and every mans *opinion* is his *Bible*. Well, this may make us mourne, but let us not murmur through discontent: Consider,

1. *Reply* 1. Errour makes a discovery of men,

1. 1. *Bad men*; Errour discovers such as are tainted and corrupt. When the Leprosie brake forth in the forehead, then was the *Leper* discovered.

Errour

Errour is a ſpiritual Baſtard; the devil is the father, and pride the mother; you never knew an erroneous man, but he was a proud man: now, it is good that ſuch men ſhould be laid open, to the intent, firſt, that Gods righteous judgements upon them may be adored *; Secondly, that others who are free, be not infected. If a man hath the plague, it is well it breaks forth; for my part, I would avoid an Heretick as I would avoid the devil, for he is ſent on his errand. I appeale to you, if there were a Taverne in this City, where under a pretence of ſelling wine, many hogſheads of poiſon were to be ſold, were it not well that others ſhould know of it that they might not buy? it is good that thoſe who have poiſoned opinions ſhould be known, that the people of God may not come near either the ſent, or taſt of that poiſon.

* 2 Theſ. 2. 12.

2. Errour is a *Touch-ſtone* to diſco- 2.

ver *good men*; it tries the gold, *There must be Heresies, that they which are approved, may be made manifest* *. Thus our love to Christ and zeale for truth doth appear. God shewes who are the living fish, *viz.* such as swim against the stream; who are the sound sheep, *viz.* such as feed in the green pastures of the Ordinances; who are the Doves, *viz.* such as live in the best aire, where the Spirit breaths; God sets a Garland of honour upon these, *These are they which came out of great tribulation* *. So, these are they that have opposed the Errors of the times, these are they that have preserved the virginity of their conscience; who have kept their judgement sound, and their heart soft. God will have a Trophy of honour set upon some of his Saints; they shall be renowned for their sincerity, being like the Cypresse, *quæ viriditatem in hyeme non amittit* *, which keeps its greenesse and

* 1 Cor. 11.14

* Rev. 7.14

* Ambrose

and freſhneſſe in the winter-ſeaſon.

2. Be not ſinfully diſcontented, for God can make the errours of the Church advantagious to truth. Thus the truths of God have come to be more beaten out and confirmed; as it is in *Law*, one man laying a falſe title to a piece of land, the true title hath by this meanes been the more ſearched into & ratified; ſome had never ſo ſtudied to defend the truth by *Scripture*, if others had not endeavoured to overthrow it by *Sophiſtry*; all the miſts and fogs of Error that have riſen out of the bottomleſſe pit, have made the glorious Sun *of truth* to ſhine ſo much the brighter. Had not *Arius* and *Sabellius* broached their damnable Errours, the truth of thoſe queſtions about the bleſſed *Trinity* had never been ſo diſcuſſed and defended by *Athanaſius*, *Auguſtine*, and others; had not the devil brought in ſo much of his 2. *Reply*

princely darkneſs, the Champions for Truth had never runne ſo faſt to Scripture to light their Lamps. So that God who hath a *wheele within a wheele*, over-rules theſe things wiſely, and turns them to the beſt. Truth is an heavenly plant that ſettles by ſhaking.

3. *Reply* *Etiam rameta auri preciosa.* 3. God raiſeth the price of his truth the more; the very ſhreds and filings of truth are venerable. When there is much counterfeit metal abroad, we prize the true Gold the more: the pure wine of truth is never more precious, than when unſound doctrines are broached and vented.

4. *Reply* 4. Errour makes us more thankful to God for the jewel of truth. When you ſee another infected with the Plague, how thankful are you, that God hath freed you from the infection? when we ſee others have the *Leproſie in the head*, how thankful are we to God that he hath not given

given us over to believe a lie, and so be damned? It is a good use that may be made even of the Errour of the times, when it makes us more humble and thankful, adoring the free grace of God who hath kept us from drinking of that deadly poison.

2. The second branch of the Apology that discontent makes, is the *impiety of the times*. I live and converse among the profane, *O that I had wings like a Dove, that I might flie away and be at rest* *! *Answ.* It is indeed sad to be mixed with the wicked. *David beheld the transgressors, & was grieved* *; and *Lot*, (who was a bright Starre in a dark night) was *vexed*, or as the word in the Original may beare, *wearied out* *, *with the unclean conversation of the wicked* *; he made the sinnes of *Sodom* spears to pierce his own soul; we ought (if there be any spark of divine love in us) to be very sensible of the

2. *Branch of the Apology.* The impiety of the times.

* Psal 55.6

* Psal 119. 58.

* καλαπονέω.

* 2 Pet. 2. 7.

the sinnes of others, and to have our hearts bleed for them; yet let us not break forth in murmuring or discontent, knowing that God in his providence hath permitted it, and surely not without some reasons; For,

1. *Reply* 1. The Lord makes the wicked an hedge to defend the godly; the wise God often makes those who are *wicked* and *peaceable*, a meanes to safeguard his people from those who are *wicked* and *cruel*. The King of *Babylon* kept *Jeremy*, and gave special order for his looking to, that he did want nothing*. God sometimes makes *brazen sinners* to be *brazen walls* to defend his people.

* Jer. 39. 11, 12.

2. *Reply* 2. God doth interline & mingle the wicked with the godly, that the godly may be a means to save the wicked; such is the *beauty of holinesse*, that it hath a magnetical force in it to allure and draw even the wicked. Sometimes

times God makes a believing husband a means to convert an unbelieving wife, and *è contrà*. *What knoweſt thou O wife, whether thou ſhalt ſave thy husband? or how knoweſt thou, O man, whether thou ſhalt ſave thy wife**? The godly living among the wicked, by their prudent advice, & pious example have won them to the embracing of Religion; if there were not ſome godly among the wicked, how in a probable way, without a miracle, can we imagine that the wicked ſhould be converted? Thoſe who are now ſhining Saints in heaven, ſometimes *ſerved divers luſts**. *Paul* once a perſecutor; *Auguſtine* once a Manichee; *Luther* once a Monk; but by the ſevere and holy carriage of the godly, were converted to the faith.

* 1 Cor. 7. 16.

* Tit. 3. 3.

SECT.

SECT. X.

The tenth Apology answered.

10 *Apology* The next Apology that Discontent makes, is lowneſſe of parts, and gifts.

I cannot, ſaith the Chriſtian, diſcourſe with that fluency; nor pray with that elegancy as others.

1. *Reply* *Anſw.* 1. *Grace is beyond gifts*; Thou compareſt thy grace with anothers gifts, there is a vaſt difference; Grace without gifts is infinitely better than gifts without grace; in Religion, the *vitals* are beſt; Gifts are a more extrinſecal and common work of the Spirit, which is incident to reprobates; grace is a more diſtinguiſhing work, and is a jewel hung only upon the Elect. Haſt thou the *ſeed of God*, the *holy anointing*? be content.

I. Thou

1. Thou ſayeſt, thou canſt not diſcourſe with that fluency as others

Anſw. Experiments in Religion are beyond notions, and *impreſſions* beyond expreſſions. *Judas* (no doubt) could make a learned diſcourſe of Chriſt, but welfare the woman in the Goſpel, that felt vertue coming out of him *. A ſanctified heart is better than a ſilver tongue. There is as much difference between gifts and grace as between a Tulip painted on the wall, and one growing in the garden. * Luk. 8. 47.

II. Thou ſayeſt, thou canſt not pray with that elegancy as others.

Anſw. Prayer is a matter more of the *heart* than the *head*. In prayer it is not ſo much *fluency* prevailes, as *fervency**; nor is God ſo much taken with the elegancy of ſpeech, as the efficacy of the Spirit. Humility is better than volubilitie; here the *mourner* is the *orator*, ſighes and groanes are the beſt Rhetorique. * Jam. 5. 16 ῥῆσις ἐνεργουμένη.

2. Be

2. *Reply* 2. Be not discontented; For, God doth usually proportion a mans parts to the place where he calls him: Some are set in a higher sphere and function, their place requires more parts and abilities; but the most inferiour member is useful in its place, and shall have a power delegated for the discharge of its peculiar office.

SECT. XI.

The eleventh Apology *answered.*

11. *Apology* The next Apology is, *The troubles of the Church.* Alas, my disquiet and discontent is not so much for my self, as the publick. The Church of God suffers.

Answ. I confesse it is sad, and we ought for this *to hang our harps upon the willows* *; he is a wooden leg in Christs body, that is not sensible of the state of the body. As a Christian must

*Psal. 137.

muſt not be *proud fleſh*, ſo neither *dead fleſh*. When the Church of God ſuffers, he muſt ſympathize; *Jeremy* wept *for the Virgin daughter of* Sion. We muſt feel our brethrens hard cords through our ſoft beds; in Muſick, if one ſtring be touched, all the reſt ſound; when God ſtrikes upon our brethren, *our bowels muſt ſound as an harp* *; be ſenſible, but do not give way to diſcontent. For conſider,

*Isa 16.11

1. *God ſits at the ſterne of his Church* *; Sometimes it is as a ſhip toſſed upon the waves, *O thou afflicted and toſſed* *: but cannot God bring this ſhip to haven, though it meet with a ſtorme upon the Sea? The ſhip in the Goſpel was toſſed, becauſe *ſinne* was in it; but it was not overwhelmed, becauſe *Chriſt* was in it. Chriſt is in the Ship of his Church, fear not ſinking; The Churches Anchor is caſt in heaven. Do not we think God loves his Church,

1. *Reply*
* Pſ. 46.5.
* Iſa 54.11.

Church, and takes as much care of it as we can? The names of the twelve Tribes were on *Aarons breſt*, ſignifying how near to Gods heart his people are; They are his *portion* *, and ſhall that be loſt? His *glory* *, and ſhall that be finally eclipſed? No certainly. God can deliver his Church, not only *from*, but *by* oppoſition; the Churches pangs ſhall help forward her deliverance.

* Deut. 32. 9.
* Iſ. 46. 13.

3. *Reply* 2. *God hath alwayes propagated Religion by ſufferings.* The foundation of the Church hath beed laid *in blood* *, and theſe ſanguine ſhowres have ever made it more fruitful. *Cain* put the knife to *Abels* throat, and ever ſince, the Churches veins have bled; but ſhe is like the *Vine*, which by bleeding growes; and like the Palm-tree, which may have this motto, *Percuſſa reſurgit*; the more weight is laid upon it, the higher it riſeth. The holineſſe and patience of the Saints

* *Sanguine fundata eſt Eccleſia, ſanguine crevit.*

Saints under their perſecutions, hath much added both to the *growth* of Religion, and the *Crown*. *Baſil*, and *Tertul.* obſerve of the Primitive Martyrs, that divers of the Heathens ſeeing their zeal and conſtancy, turned Chriſtians. Religion is that *Phenix* which hath alwayes revived and flouriſhed *in the aſhes* of holy men. *Iſaiah* ſawen aſunder; *Peter* crucified at *Jeruſalem* with his head downwards*; *Cyprian* Biſhop of *Carthage*, *Polycarp* of *Smyrna*, both martyr'd for Religion; yet evermore the Truth hath been *ſealed* by blood, and glorioufly diſperſed; whereupon *Julian* did forbear to perſecute, *non ex clementia, ſed invidia*; not out of piety, but envy; becauſe the Church grew ſo faſt, and multiplied, as *Nazianzen* well obſerves.

* *Euſeb.*

SECT. XII.

The twelfth Apology answered.

12. *Apology* The twelfth Apology that Discontent makes for it self, is this: It is not my trouble that troubles me, but it is my *sins* that do disquiet and discontent.

Answ. Be sure it be so; do not prevaricate with God and thy own soul: in true mourning for sinne when the present suffering is removed, yet the sorrow is not removed; but suppose the Apology be real, and *sin* is the ground of your discontent: Yet I answer, a mans disquiet about sin, may be *beyond its bounds* in these three cases.

1. *Reply* 10. *Dolor exanimans.* 1. When it is *disheartning*, that is, when it sets up sin above mercy. If *Israel* had onely pored upon their sting, and not looked up to the

brazen

brazen Serpent, they had never been healed. That ſorrow for ſin which drives us away from God, is not without ſinne, for there is more *deſpaire* in it than *remorſe*; The ſoul hath ſo many tears in its eyes, that it cannot ſee Chriſt. Sorrow as ſorrow doth not ſave (that were to make a Chriſt of our teares,) but is uſeful as it is preparatory in the ſoul, making ſinne *vile*, and Chriſt *precious*. Oh look up to the brazen Serpent, *the Lord Jeſus*; a ſight of his blood will revive, the medicine of his *merits* is broader than our ſore.

It is Satans policy, either to keep us from ſeeing our ſinnes; or if we will needs ſee them, that we may *be ſwallowed up of ſorrow** , either he would *ſtupifie* us, or *affright* us; either keep the glaſſe of the Law from our eyes, or elſe penſil out our ſins in ſuch Crimſon colours, that we may ſink in the *quick-ſands* of deſpaire.

* 2 Cor. 27

2. *Dolor impediens.*

2. When ſorrow is *indeſpoſing*, it untunes the heart for prayer, meditation, holy conference; it cloiſters up the ſoul. This is not *ſorrow*, but rather ſullenneſſe, and doth render a man not ſo much *Penitential*, as *Cynical*.

3. *Dolor intempeſtivus*

3. When it is *out of ſeaſon*; God bids us *rejoyce*, and we *hang our harps upon the Willows*; he bids us *truſt*, and we caſt our ſelves down, and are brought even to the margin of deſpaire. If Satan cannot keep us from mourning, he will be ſure to put us upon it when it is leaſt in ſeaſon.

When God calls us in a ſpecial manner to be thankful for mercy, and put on our white robes, then Satan will be putting us *into mourning*; and inſtead of a *garment of praiſe*, cloath us with a *ſpirit of heavineſſe*; ſo God loſeth the acknowledgement of a mercy, and we the comfort.

If

If thy ſorrow hath tuned and fitted thee for Chriſt, if it hath raiſed in thee high prizings of him, ſtrong hungerings after him, ſweet delight in him; this is as much as God requires, and a Chriſtian doth but ſin to vexe and torture himſelf further upon the wrack of his own diſcontent.

And thus I hope I have anſwered the moſt material Objections, and Apologies which this ſinne of Diſcontent doth make for it ſelfe. I ſee no reaſon why a Chriſtian ſhould be diſcontented, unleſſe for his Diſcontent. Let me in the next place propound ſomething which may be both as a loadſtone and a whetſtone to Contentation.

CHAP. XI.

Divine Motives to Contentment.

AND so I proceed to the Arguments, or Motives that may quicken to Contentment.

SECT. I.

The first Argument to Contentation.

The first Argument to Contentation.

1. Consider the excellency of it. Contentment is a flower that doth not grow in every garden; it teacheth a man how in the midst of want to abound. You would think it were excellent, if I could prescribe a receit, or antidote against povertie; but

but behold, here is that which is more excellent, for a man to want, & yet have enough, this alone contentment of ſpirit brings. Contentation is πᾶν φάρμακον, a remedy againſt all our troubles, a *levamen* to all our burdens, it is *the cure of care.* Contentation, though it be not properly *a Grace*, (it is rather *a diſpoſition of minde*,) yet in it there is *optimum temperamentum*, an happy temperature and mixture of all the graces: It is a moſt precious compound which is made up of *Faith, Patience, Meekneſs, Humility, &c.* which are the ingredients put into it. Now there are *in ſpecie* theſe ſeven rare excellencies in Contentment.

1. A contented Chriſtian *carries heaven about him*; For what is Heaven but that ſweet repoſe and full contentment that the ſoul ſhall have in God? in contentment there is the firſt fruits of heaven. 1. *Excellency of Contantation.*

There are two things in a contented spirit which makes it like Heaven.

1. *God is there*; Something of God is to be seen in that heart. A discontented Christian is like a rough tempestuous sea; when the water is rough, you can see nothing there; but when it is smooth & serene, then you may behold your face in the water *: When the heart rageth through discontent, it is like a rough Sea; you can see nothing there, unless passion and murmuring: there is nothing of God, nothing of heaven in that heart; but by vertue of Contentment, 'tis like the Sea when it is smooth and calm; there is *a face shining there*; you may see something of Christ in that heart, a representation of all the graces.

1. *Ibi Deus.*

*Prov. 27. 19

2. *Rest is there.* O what a Sabbath is kept in a contented heart! What an heaven! A contented Christian is like *Noah* in the Ark; though

2. *Ibi requies*

though the Arke were toſſed with waves, *Noah* could ſit and ſing in the Arke. The ſoul that is gotten into *the Arke of Contentment*, ſits quiet, and ſailes above all the waves of trouble; he can ſing in this ſpiritual Arke; The wheeles of the Chariot move, but the axle-tree ſtirs not; the circumference of the Heavens is carried about the earth, but the earth moves not out of its centre. When we meet with motion and change in the creatures round about us, a contented ſpirit is not ſtirred or moved out of its centre. The ſailes of a mill move with the wind, but the mill it ſelf ſtands ſtill; An embleme of contentment: When our outward eſtate moves with the wind of providence, yet the heart is ſetled through holy Contentment; and when others are like quick-ſilver ſhaking and trembling through diſquiet, the contented ſpirit can ſay as *David*, *O God, my heart is fixed,*

my

*Pſ. 57. 7. *my heart is fixed* *; what is this but a piece of heaven?

2. Excellency. 2. Whatever is defective in the creature, is *made up in Contentment.* A Chriſtian may want the comforts that others have, the land, and poſſeſſions; but God hath diſtilled into his heart that contentment which is far better; In this ſenſe that is true of our Saviour, *He ſhall have in this* *Mat. 19. 29. *life an hundred fold* *. Perhaps he that ventured all for Chriſt, never hath his houſe or land again; I, but God gives him a *contented ſpirit*; and this breeds ſuch joy in the ſoul, as is infinitely ſweeter than all his houſes and lands which he left for Chriſt. It was ſad with *David* in regard of his outward comforts; he being driven (as ſome think) from his Kingdome; yet in regard of that ſweet contentment he found in God, he had more comfort than men uſe to have in time of *harveſt* * Pſal. 4. 7. *and vintage* *. One man hath houſe and

and lands to live upon, another hath nothing, only a ſmall trade; yet even that brings in a livelihood. A Chriſtian may have little in the world, but he drives the trade of contentment; and ſo he knows as well how to *want*, as to *abound*. O the rare *art*, or rather *miracle* of contentment! Wicked men are often diſquieted in the enjoyment of all things; the contented Chriſtian is well in the want of all things.

Queſt. But how comes a Chriſtian to be contented in the deficiency of outward comforts? *Queſt.*

Anſw. A Chriſtian finds contentment diſtilled out of the breſts of the Promiſes. He is poor in *purſe*, but rich in *Promiſe*. There is one promiſe brings much ſweet contentment into the ſoul; *They that ſeek the Lord ſhall not want any good thing* *. If the thing we deſire be good for us, we ſhall have it; if it be not good, then the not having it is good *Anſw.* * Pſ. 34. 10

good for us. The resting satisfied with this Promise gives contentment.

3. *Excellency.* 3. Contentment makes a man in tune to serve God; it oiles the wheels of the soul, and makes it more agil & nimble; it composeth the heart, and now is fit for prayer, meditation, &c. How can he that is in a passion of grief, or discontent, *serve God without distraction**? Contentment doth prepare and tune the heart. First, you prepare the Viol, and winde up the strings, ere you play a fit of musick. When a Christians heart is wound up to this heavenly frame of Contentment, then it is fit for duty. A discontented Christian is like *Saul* when the *evil spirit* came upon him. O what jarrings and discords doth he make in prayer! When an Army is put into a disorder, now it is not fit for battel: When the thoughts are scattered and distracted about the cares of this life, a man is

* 1 Cor. 7. 35.

not

not fit for devotion. Diſcontent takes the heart wholly off from God, and fixeth it upon the preſent trouble, ſo that a mans minde is not upon his *prayer*, but upon his *croſſe*.

Diſcontent doth diſjoynt the ſoul, and it is impoſſible now that a Chriſtian ſhould go ſo ſteadily, and chearfully in Gods ſervice. O how lame is his devotion! The diſcontented perſon gives God but *halfe* a duty; his Religion is nothing but *bodily exercise*, it wants a ſoul to animate it. *David* would not offer that to God which *coſt him nothing**; where there is too much worldly *care*, there is too little ſpiritual *coſt* in a duty. The diſcontented perſon doth his duties *by halves*; he is juſt like *Ephraim, a cake not turned**; he is a cake baked on one ſide; he gives God the *outſide*, but not the ſpiritual part, his heart is not in duty; he is baked on one ſide, but the other ſide dough; and

* 2 Sam. 24. 24.

* Hoſ. 7. 8.

and what profit is there of such raw, indigested services? He that gives God only the skin of worship, what can he expect more than the shell of comfort? Contentation brings the heart into frame; and then only do we give God the flower and spirits of a duty, when the soul is composed; now a Christian doth *remagere*, his heart is intense and serious. There are some duties which we cannot performe as we ought without Contentment; As,

1. *To rejoyce in God.* How can he rejoyce that is discontented? He is fitter for *Repining* than *Rejoyceing*.

2. *To be thankful for mercy.* Can a discontented person be thankful? he can be *fretful*, not thankful.

* Ezr. 9. 23 3. *To justifie God in his proceedings**. How can he do this who is discontented with his condition? He will sooner censure Gods wisdome, then

clear

cleare his juſtice. Oh then how excellent is *Contentation*, which doth prepare, and as it were, ſtring the heart for duty? Indeed Contentment doth not only make our duties lively and agil, but *acceptable*. 'Tis this that puts beauty and worth into them; for Contentment *ſettles* the ſoul: Now as it is with *milke*, when it is always ſtirring, you can make nothing of it, but let it ſettle a while and then it turns to cream: When the heart is overmuch ſtirred with diſquiet and diſcontent, you can make nothing of thoſe duties: how thin, how fletten, & jejune are they? But when the heart is once ſetled by holy Contentment, now there is ſome worth in our duties, now they turn to cream.

4. Contentment is the ſpiritual *Arch*, or pillar of the ſoul; it fits a man to *bear burdens*; he whoſe heart is ready to ſink under the leaſt ſin, by vertue of this hath a ſpirit invincible 4. *Excellency.*

cible under ſufferings. A contented Chriſtian is like the Camomile, the more it is troden upon, the more it growes; as Phyſick works diſeaſes out of the body, ſo doth contentment work trouble out of the heart. Thus it argues; If I am under reproach, God can vindicate me; If I am in want, God can relieve me. *Ye ſhall not ſee wind, nor raine; yet the valley ſhall be filled with water* *. Thus holy Contentment keeps the heart from fainting; in the *Autumne* when the fruit and leaves are blown off, ſtill there is ſap in the root: When there is an autumne upon our external felicity, the leaves of our eſtate drop off, ſtill there is the ſap of Contentment in the heart; and a Chriſtian hath life inwardly, when his outward comforts do not bloſſome. The contented heart is never out of heart. Contentation is a golden ſhield, that doth beat back diſcouragements. *Humility* is like the lead

* 2 King 3. 17.

to

to the net, which keeps the ſoul down when it is riſing through paſſion; and *Contentment* is like the cork which keeps the heart up when it is ſinking through diſcouragement. Contentment is the great underproper; it is like the *Beame* which beares whatever weight is laid upon it; nay, it is like a *Rock* that breaks the waves.

'Tis ſtrange to obſerve the ſame affliction lying upon two men, how differently they carry themſelves under it. The contented Chriſtian is like *Samſon*, that carried away the gates of the City upon his back*; he can go away with his croſſe cheerfully and makes nothing of it; the other is like *Iſſachar* couching down under his burden*: the reaſon is, the one is content, and that breeds courage; the other diſcontented, and that breeds fainting. Diſcontent ſwells the grief, and grief breaks the heart. When this ſacred ſinew of

* Judges 16.3.

* Gen. 49 14.

Contentment begins to ſhrink, we go limping under our afflictions. We know not what burdens God may exerciſe us with; let us therefore preſerve Contentment; as is our *Contentment*, ſuch will be our *courage*. *David* with his five ſtones and his ſling defied *Goliah*, and overcame him. Get but Contentment into the ſling of your heart; and with this ſacred ſtone you may both defie the world and conquer it; you may break thoſe afflictions which elſe will break you.

5. Excellency. 5. A fifth excellency is, Contentment prevents many *ſinnes, and tentations.*

1. It prevents many *ſinnes*. Where there wants Contentment, there wants no ſin; diſcontentedneſſe with our condition, is a ſin that doth not go alone, but is like the firſt link of the chaine, which draws all the other links along with it. In particular, there are two ſinnes which Con-

Contentation prevents.

1. *Impatience.* Discontent and Impatience are two Twins; *This evil is of the Lord, why should I wait any longer* ?* As if God were so tied that he must give us the mercy just when we desire. Impatience is no small sin; as will appear, if you consider whence it ariseth; As, *2King.6. 33.

1. It is for want of faith. Faith gives a right notion of God; it is an intelligent grace; it believes that Gods wisdom tempers, and his love sweetens all ingredients; this works patience; *Shall I not drink the cup which my Father hath given me?* Impatience is the daughter of infidelity. If a patient hath an ill opinion of the Physician, & conceits that he comes to poyson him, he will take none of his Receits. When we have a prejudice against God, and conceit that he comes to kill us, and undo us, then we storme, and cry out through Impatience. We are like a foolish

man('tis *Chrysostoms* simile) that cries out, Away with the plaister, though it be in order to a cure; is it not better that the plaister smart a little, than the wound fester and rankle?

2. Impatience is for want of love to God. We will bear his reproofs whom we love, not onely patiently, but thankfully. *Love thinks no evil* *. It puts the fairest and most candid glosse upon the actions of a friend; *Love covers evil.* If it were possible for God in the least manner to erre, (which were blasphemy to think) love would cover that errour; love takes every thing in the best sense; it makes us beare any stroke, *It endureth all things* *; had we love to God, we should have patience.

*1 Cor. 13. 5.

*1 Cor. 13. 7.

3. *Impatience is for want of Humility.* The impatient man was never humbled under the burden of sin; he that studies his sins, the numberlesse number of them, how they

they are twiſted together, and ſadly accented, is patient, and ſaith, *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him**. The greater noiſe drowns the leſſer; when the ſea roares, the rivers are ſtill; he that lets his thoughts expatiate about ſin, is both ſilent and amaz'd, he wonders it is no worſe with him. How great then is this ſin of impatience! and how excellent is *Contentation*, which is a *Superſedeas* or counterpoiſon againſt this ſin? The contented Chriſtian beleeving that God doth all in love, is patient, and hath not one word to ſay unleſſe to juſtifie God*. That is the firſt ſin which Contentation prevents.

* Mica. 7. 9.

* Pſa. 51. 4.

2. It prevents *murmuring*, a ſin which is a degree higher than the other; murmuring is a quarrelling with God, & inveighing againſt him, *They ſpake againſt God**; the murmurer ſaith interpretatively, that God

* Num. 21. 5.

hath not dealt well with him, and he hath deserved better from him. The murmurer *chargeth God with folly*; This is the language, or rather *blasphemy* of a murmuring spirit, God might have been a wiser and a better God. The murmurer is a mutineer. The *Israelites* are called in the same text *murmurers & rebels**; and is not rebellion *as the sin of witchcraft*? Thou that art a murmurer, art in the account of God as a *Witch*, a *Sorcerer*, as one that deals with the devil. This is a sin of the first magnitude; murmuring oft ends in cursing: *Micha's* mother fell to cursing, when the *talents of silver were taken away**. So doth the murmurer when apart of his estate is taken away; our *murmuring* is the devils *musick*; this is that sin which God cannot bear; *How long shall I bear with this people that murmur against me**? It is a sin which whets the sword against a people, it is a land-destroying sinne; *Murmur ye not*

* Numb. 17. 10.

* Judg. 17. 2.

* Numb. 14. 7.

as

as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer *. 'Tis a ripening sin this, without Gods mercy, will hasten *Englands* funerals. O then how excellent is contentation which prevents this sin! To be contented, and yet murmur, is a solœcism, A contented Christian doth acquiesce in his present condition, and doth not murmur, but admire. Herein appears the excellency of contentation, it is a spiritual antidote against sin. * 1 Cor. 10. 10.

2. Contentment prevents many temptations; Discontent is a devil that is alwayes tempting. 1. It puts a man upon *indirect means*: He that is poor and discontented, will attempt any thing; he will go to the devil for riches, he that is proud and discontented will hang himselfe, as *Achitophel* did when his counsel was rejected. Satan takes great advantage of our discontent; he loves to fish in these *troubled waters*. Dis- 1 *Tentation*

content doth both eclipse reason and weaken faith; & it is Satans policy, he doth usually break over the hedge where it is weakest. Discontent makes a breach in the soul, and usually at this breach the devil enters by a tentation, and stormes the soul. How easily can the devil by his *Logick* dispute a discontented Christian into sinne? He formes such a syllogism as this. He that is in want must study self-preservation: But you are now in want, therefore you ought to study self-preservation. Hereupon to make good his *Conclusion*, he tempts to the forbidden fruit, not distinguishing between what is *needful*, and what is *lawful*. What? saith he, dost thou want a livelihood? never be such a fool as starve; take *the rising side* at a venture, be it good or bad, *eat the bread of deceit, drink the wine of violence*. Thus you see how the discontented man is a prey to that sad ten-

*Pro. 30. 9 tation, * *to steal, and take Gods Name*

in

in vaine. Contentation is a ſhield againſt tentation; for he that is contented, knows as well how to *want*, as to *abound*.

He will not ſin to get a living; though the *bill of fare* grows ſhort, he is content. He lives as the birds of the aire, upon Gods Providence, and doubts not but he ſhall have enough to pay for his paſſage to heaven.

4. Diſcontent tempts a man to *Atheiſm and Apoſtacy*; ſure there is no God to take care of things here below; would he ſuffer them to be in want who have *walked mournfully before him**? ſaith Diſcontent; Throw off Chriſts livery, deſiſt from thy Religion. Thus *Jobs* wife, being diſcontented with her condition, ſaith to her husband, *Doſt thou ſtill retain thy integrity**? as if ſhe had ſaid, Doſt thou not ſee, *Job*, what is become of all thy Religion? *Thou feareſt God and eſchewest evil*, and what art thou the

2 Tentation

* Mal. 3. 14

* Job 2. 9.

the better? see how God turnes his hand against thee; he hath smitten thee in thy body, estate, relations, and *Dost thou still retain thy integrity?* what? still devout? still weep and pray before him? Thou fool, cast off Religion, *turne Atheist.* Here was a sore tentation that the Devil did hand over to *Job*, by his discontented wife; only his grace, as a golden shield, did ward off the blow from his heart, *Thou speakest as one of the foolish women.* What profit is it, saith the discontented person, *to serve the Almighty*; Those that never trouble themselves about Religion, are the prosperous men, and I in the mean while suffer want: as good give over driving the trade of Religion, if this be all my reward. This is a sore tentation, and oft it prevailes; Atheisme is the fruit that grows out of the blossom of discontent.

Oh then, behold the excellency of contentment; it doth repel this ten-

tentation. If God be mine, ſaith the contented ſpirit, it is enough; though I have no lands or tenements, his ſmile makes heaven; *His loves are better than wine*; *Better is the gleanings of* Ephraim *than the vintage of Abiezer**. I have little *in hand*, but much *in hope*; my *livelihood* is ſhort, but this is his promiſe, *even eternal life**. I am purſued by *malice*; but better is perſecuted godlineſſe than proſperous wickedneſſe. Thus divine contentment is a ſpiritual antidote both againſt *ſinne* and *tentation*.

* Jud. 8. 2.

* 1 John 2. 25.

6. Contentment ſweetens every condition. Chriſt turned the water into wine; ſo Contentment turnes the water of *Marah* into ſpiritual wine. Have I but little? yet it is more than I can deſerve or challenge. This *modicum* is in mercy; 'tis the fruit of Chriſts blood; 'tis the legacy of free grace: a ſmall preſent ſent from a King is highly valued: this little I have is with a good conſcience,

6. *Excellency.*

ſcience. 'Tis not *ſtollen water*; guilt hath not muddied or poiſoned it; it runs pure. This *little* is a pledge of more; this bit of bread, is an earneſt of that bread which I ſhall eat *in the Kingdome of God.* This little water in the cruſe, is an earneſt of that heavenly *Nectar* which ſhall be diſtill'd from the *true Vine.* Do I meet with ſome croſſes? my comfort is, if they be heavy, I have not far to go; I ſhall but carry my croſſe to *Golgotha*, and there I ſhall leave it; My croſſe is light in regard of the weight of glory. Hath God taken away my comforts from me? 'tis well, the Comforter ſtill abides. Thus *Contentment* as an honey-combe drops ſweetneſſe into every condition. Diſcontent is a leaven that ſowrs every comfort, it puts aloes and wormwood upon the breaſt of the creature, it leſſens every mercy, it trebbles every croſſe; but the contented ſpirit ſuckes ſweetneſſe from every

every flower of providence, it can make a treacle of poyſon. *Contentation* is full of *Conſolation*.

7. Contentment hath this excellency, it is the beſt *commentator* upon Providence; it makes a faire interpretation of all Gods dealings. Let the Providences of God be never ſo dark or bloody, Contentment doth conſtrue them ever in the beſt ſenſe. I may ſay of it as the Apoſtle of charity, *It thinks no evil**. Sickneſſe (ſaith Contentment) is Gods furnace, to refine his gold and make it ſparkle the more; the priſon is an Oratory, or houſe of prayer. What if God melts away the creature from me? he ſaw perhaps my heart grew too much in love with it; had I been long in that fat paſture, I ſhould have ſurfeited; and the better my eſtate had been, the worſe my ſoul would have been. God is wiſe; he hath done this, either to prevent ſome ſin, or

7. Excellency.

* 1 Cor. 13.

or to exercise some grace. What a blessed frame of heart is this? A contented Christian is an Advocate for God against unbelief and impatience; Whereas Discontent takes every thing from God in the worst sense; it doth implead and censure God: This evil I feele is but a symptome of greater evil: God is about to undoe me; *The Lord hath brought us hither into the Wilderness to slay us* *. The contented soul takes all well; and when his condition is never so bad, he can say, *Yet God is good* *.

* Numb. 20. 4.

* Ps. 73. 1.

SECT. II.

The second Argument to Contentation.

* *O fortunatos nimium, bona si sua nôrint.* Virg.

The second Argument or Motive to Contentment is, a Christian hath that which may make him content*.

1. Hath

1. Hath not God given thee Christ? in him there are *unsearchable riches* *; He is such a golden *mine* of wisdome and grace, that all the Saints and Angels can never dig to the bottome; as *Seneca* said to his friend *Polybius* *, never complain of thy hard fortune as long as *Cæsar* is thy friend: so I say to a Beleever, never complaine as long as Christ is thy friend; He is an enriching pearle, a sparkling Diamond, the infinite lustre of his merits makes us shine in Gods eyes*; in him there is both *fulnesse* and *sweetnes*; he is *ineffabile bonum* *. Scrue up your thoughts to the highest ακμὴ and pinacle, stretch them to the utmost period, let them expatiate to their full latitude and extent; yet they fall infinitely short of those ineffable and inexhaustible treasures which are locked up in Jesus Christ: and is not here enough to give the soul content? A Christian that wants *ne-*

* Eph. 3. 1.

* *Fac tibi non est de fortuna conqueri, salvo Cæsare.* Sen.

* Eph. 1. 7.

* Aug.

cessaries,

ceſſaries, yet having Chriſt, he hath *the one thing needful* *.

* *Qui habet habentem omnia, habet omnia*

2. Thy ſoul is exerciſed and enamell'd with the graces of the Spirit, and is not here enough to give contentment? Grace is of a divine birth; it is the new plantation; it is the flower of the heavenly Paradiſe; 'tis the embroydery of the Spirit. 'tis *the ſeed of God* *; 'tis *the ſacred unction* *; 'tis Chriſts portraiture in the ſoul; 'tis the very foundation on which the ſuperſtructure of glory is laid. O, of what infinite value is Grace! What a Jewel is Faith! well may it be call'd *precious* Faith *. What is love, but a divine ſparkle in the ſoul? A ſoul beautified with grace, is like a roome richly hung with Arras, or Tapeſtry, or the Firmament beſpangled with glittering Starres. Theſe are the *true riches* *, which cannot ſtand with reprobation; and is not here enough to give the ſoul *Contentment?* What

* 1 Joh. 3. 9
* Joh. 2. 27.
* 1 Pet. 1. 7.
* Luk 16 11.

are

are all other things but like the wings of a butterfly, curiously painted: but they defile our fingers. Earthly riches, saith *Augustine*, are full of povertie*; so indeed they are. For, 1. They cannot enrich the soul; Often-times under silken apparel, there is a thred-bare soul. 2. These are corruptible: *Riches are not for ever*, as the wise man saith*. Heaven is a place where gold and silver will not go; a Beleever is rich *towards God**, why then art thou discontented? hath not God given thee that which is better than the world? What if he doth not give thee the box, if he gives thee the Jewel? What if he denies thee farthings, if he pays thee in a better coine? he gives thee gold, *viz.* spiritual mercies. What if the *water in the bottle* be spent? thou hast enough in the fountain; What need he complain of the worlds *Emptines* that hath Gods *Fulnes*? The Lord is *my portion*, saith

* *Divitiæ corporales paupertatis plenæ sunt.* Aug.

* Prov. 27. 24.

* Luk. 12. 21.

Psal. 16 5.

saith *David*, then let the lines fall where they will, in a *sick-bed*, or *prison*, I will say, *The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.* 3. Art thou not heire to all the promises? hast thou not a reversion of heaven? when thou letteſt go thy hold of natural life, art thou not sure of eternal life? hath not God given thee the earnest and first-fruits of glory? is not here enough to work the heart to Contentment?

What though some have a fraught
Of Cloves, and Nutmegs and in Cinamon saile?
If thou hast wherewithal to spice a draught,
When griefs prevaile,

Herberts Poems.

And for the future time art heir
To th' Ile of spices; is't not fair?

SECT.

SECT. III.

The third Argument to Contentation.

The third Argument is, *Be content*, for else we confute our own prayers; We pray, *Thy will be done*; It is the will of God that we should be in such a condition; he hath decreed it, and he sees it best for us: Why then do we murmur, and are discontented at that which we pray for? either we are not in good earnest in our prayer, which argues *hypocrisie*, or else we contradict our selves, which argues *folly*.

SECT. IV.

The fourth Argument to Contentation.

The fourth Argument to Con-

ſaith *David*, then let the lines fall where they will, in a *ſick-bed*, or *priſon*, I will ſay, *The lines are fallen unto me in pleaſant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.* 3. Art thou not heire to all the promiſes? haſt thou not a reverſion of heaven? when thou letteſt go thy hold of natural life, art thou not ſure of eternal life? hath not God given thee the earneſt and firſt-fruits of glory? is not here enough to work the heart to Contentment?

What though ſome have a fraught
Of Cloves, and Nutmegs and in Cinamon ſaile?
If thou haſt wherewithal to ſpice a draught,
When griefs prevaile,

Herberts Poems.

And for the future time art heir
To th' Ile of ſpices; is't not fair?

SECT.

SECT. III.

The third Argument to Contentation.

The third Argument is, *Be content*, for else we confute our own prayers; We pray, *Thy will be done*; It is the will of God that we should be in such a condition; he hath decreed it, and he sees it best for us: Why then do we murmur, and are discontented at that which we pray for? either we are not in good earnest in our prayer, which argues *hypocrisie*, or else we contradict our selves, which argues *folly*.

SECT. IV.

The fourth Argument to Contentation.

The fourth Argument to Con-

tentment is, becauſe now God hath his end, and Satan miſſeth of his end.

1. *God hath his end.* Gods end in all his croſſe providences, is to bring the heart to ſubmit & be content; and indeed this pleaſeth God much; he loves to ſee his children ſatisfied with that portion he doth carve and allot them. It contents him to ſee us contented: Therefore let us acquieſce in Gods Providence; Now God hath his end.

2. *Satan miſſeth of his end.* The end why the Devil (though by Gods permiſſion) did ſmite *Job*, in his body and eſtate; was to perplex his minde; he did vex his *body* on purpoſe, that he might diſquiet *his ſpirit*. He hoped to bring *Job* into a fit of diſcontent; and then, that he would in a paſſion break forth againſt God; but *Job* being ſo well contented with his condition, as that he falls *to bleſſing of God*, he did now diſappoint Sa-

Satan of his hope. *The Devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon* *. Why doth the devil throw us into priſon? It is not ſo much the hurting our body, as the moleſting our minde that he aimes at; he would impriſon our *Contentment*, and diſturbe the regular motion of our ſouls; this is his deſigne: 'tis not ſo much the putting us into a *priſon*, as the putting us into a *paſſion*, that he attempts; but by holy contentation, Satan loſeth his prey, he miſſeth of his end. The devil hath oft deceived us; the beſt way to deceive him, is by *contentation* in the midſt of *tentation*; our contentment will diſcontent Satan. Oh, let us not gratifie our enemy. Diſcontent is the Devils *delight*; now it is as he would have it, he loves to warme himſelfe at the fire of our paſſions. *Repentance* is the joy *of the Angels*, and *diſcontent* is the joy *of the Devils*: As the Devil danceth at diſcord, ſo he ſings

* Rev. 2. 10

at discontent. The fire of our passions makes the devil a bon-fire; 'tis a kinde of heaven to him to see us torturing our selves with our own troubles; but by holy Contentment we frustrate him of his purpose, and do as it were put him out of countenance.

SECT. V.

The fifth Argument to Contentation.

The next Argument is, by contentment a Christian gets a victory over himselfe: For a man to be able to rule his own spirit *, this of all others the most noble conquest*. Passion denotes weakness; to be discontented is sutable to *flesh* and *blood*; but to be in every state content; reproached, yet *content*; imprisoned, yet *content*; this is above nature; this is some of that holy valour

* *Fortior est qui se quàm qui fortissima vincit mœnia, &c.*
* Prov. 16. 32.

lour and chivalry, which only a divine ſpirit is able to infuſe. In the midſt of the affronts of the world to be patient, and in the changes of the world to have the ſpirit calmed; this argues μεγαλόψυχον θύμον, as *Homer* ſpeaks; this is a conqueſt worthy indeed of the Garland of honour. Holy *Job* deveſted and turned out of all, leaving his *Scarlet*, and embracing the *Dung-hill*, (a ſad cataſtrophe,) yet he had learned Contentment. 'Tis ſaid, *He fell upon the ground and worſhipped* *. One would have thought he ſhould have fallen upon the ground and *blaſphemed*; no, he fell and *worſhipped*. He adored Gods juſtice and holineſſe; behold the ſtrength of grace! here was an humble ſubmiſſion, yet a noble conqueſt; he got the victory over himſelf. 'Tis no great matter for a man to yeild to his own paſſions, this is facile and fœminine; but to content himſelf in denying of himſelf, this is ſacred.

* Job 1.20.

SECT. VI.

The sixth Argument to Contentation.

The sixth great Argument to work the heart to Contentment, is the consideration that all Gods providences, how crosse or bloody soever, shall do a Beleever good; *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God* *. Not only *all good things*, but *all evil things* work for good; and shall we be discontented at that which works for our good? Suppose our troubles are twisted together, and sadly accented, as the Poet describes it;

* Rom. 8. 28

πάντα συνεργεῖ εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν.

Littora quot conchas, quot amœna Rosaria flores,
Quótve soporiferum grana papaver habet:
Sylva feras quot alit, quot piscibus unda natatur,

Et

Et tenerum pennis aëra pulſat avis;
Tot premor adverſis, &c. Ovid.

What ſickneſſe, poverty, reproach, Law-ſuits, &c. do unite and muſter their forces againſt us? All ſhall work εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν, for good; our *maladies* ſhall be our *medicines*: & ſhall we repine at that which ſhall undoubtedly do us good? *Unto the upright there ariſeth light in darkneſſe* *. Affliction may be baptiz'd *Marah*; 'tis bitter, but *Phyſical*. Becauſe this is ſo full of comfort, and may be a moſt excellent *Catholicon* againſt diſcontent, I ſhall a little expatiate. * Pſ. 112. 4

Queſt. It will be enquired how the evils of affliction work for good? *Queſt.*

R. Several waies.

1. They are *diſciplinary*; they teach us*. The Pſalmiſt having very elegantly deſcrib'd the Churches trouble, *Pſal.* 74. prefixeth this title to the *Pſalme*, משכיל, which ſignifies *Anſw.* * *Schola crucis eſt ſcholalucis.*

nifies *a Psalme giving instruction*; that which *seals up instruction*, works for good. God puts us sometimes under the *black rod*; but it is *virga disciplinaris*, a rod of discipline; *Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it* *. God makes our *Adversity*, our *University*: Affliction is a *Preacher*; *Blow the trumpet in* Tekoah, Jer. 6. 1. The Trumpet was to preach to the people, as appeares, *ver.* 6. *Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem.* Sometimes God speaks to the Minister to lift up his voice like a *Trumpet*; & here he speaks to the Trumpet, to lift up its voice like a *Minister*. Afflictions teach us,

*Mica 9.9

*Jer. 6. 1.

*Is. 58. 1.

1. *Humility*: commonly prosperous, and proud; *corrections* are Gods *corrosives* to eat out the proud flesh. Jesus Christ is *a Lily of the valleys* *, he dwells in an humble heart; God brings us into the valley of teares, that he may bring us into the valley of humilitie; *Remembring*

*Cant. 2. 1

bring my affliction, the wormwood and the gall; my soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me *; When men are grown high, God hath no better way with them, than to brew them a *cup of wormwood.* Afflictions are compared to *thorns* *. Gods thornes are to prick the bladder of pride: suppose a man run at another with a sword to kill him, accidentally; it only lets out his impostume; this doth him good. Gods sword is to let out the impostume of pride; and shall that which makes us *humble*, makes us discontented?

* Lam. 3. 19, 20.

* Hos. 2. 8.

2. Afflictions teach us Repentance; *Thou hast chastised me, & I was chastised. I repented; and after I was instructed I smote upon my thigh, &c.** Repentance is the precious fruit that grows upon the *Crosse.* When the fire is put under the Still, the water drops from the Roses: fiery afflictions make the waters of repentance drop and distill from the eyes,

* Jer. 31. 18, 19.

eyes, and is here any cauſe of diſcontent?

3. Afflictions teach us to pray better*, *They poured out a prayer when thy chaſtening was upon them* *. Before, they would ſay a prayer; now they *poured* out a prayer; *Vigilabat in ceto, qui ſtertebat in navi*; Jonah was aſleep in the ſhip, but awake and at prayer in the *Whales belly*. When God puts under the firebrands of affliction, now our hearts boile over the more; God loves to have his children *poſſeſſed* with a *ſpirit of prayer*. Never did *David the ſweet ſinger of Iſrael* tune his Harp more melodiouſly; never did he pray better than when he was *upon the waters*. Thus afflictions do *indiſcipline*, and ſhall we be diſcontented at that which is for our good?

* *Mala quæ hîc nos premunt, ad Deum confugere faciunt.* Greg.

* Iſa. 26. 16

2. Afflictions are *probatory**. Gold is not the worſe for being tried, or corne for being fanned. Affliction is the touchſtone of ſinceritie, it tries

* Pſal. 66. 10, 11.

tries what mettal we are made of; affliction is Gods *fan* and his *sieve*. 'Tis good that men be known; some serve God for a *livery*; they are like the fisherman that makes use of his net, only to catch the fish: So they go a fishing with the net of Religion, only to catch preferment; Affliction discovers these. The *Donatists* went to the *Gothes*, when the Arians prevailed; Hypocrites will not saile in a storme; true grace holds out in the *winter season*. That is a *precious faith*, which, like the star, shines brightest in the darkest night. 'Tis good that our graces should be brought to a trial; thus we have the comfort, and the Gospel the honour; and why then discontented?

3. Afflictions they are *expurgatory*; these evils work for good, because they work out sinne; and shall I be discontented at this? What if I have more *trouble*, if I have lesse *sin*? The brightest day hath its clouds, the purest

pureſt gold its droſſe, the moſt refined ſoul hath ſome dees of corruption. The Saints loſe nothing in the furnace, but what they can well ſpare, *their droſs*; is not this for our good? why then ſhould we murmur?

* Luke 12. 49. *I am come to ſend fire on the earth**. *Tertullian* underſtands it of the fire of *affliction*. God makes this like the fire of the three children, which burned only their bonds, and ſet them at liberty in the furnace: So the fire of affliction ſerves to burn the bonds of iniquity. *By this therefore ſhall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit, to take away* * Iſa. 27. 9. *his ſinne**. When affliction or death comes to a wicked man, it takes away *his ſoul*; when it comes to a godly man, it only takes away his *ſinne*: is there then any cauſe why we ſhould be diſcontented? God ſteeps us in the briniſh waters of affliction, that he may take out our *. Cor. 3. 9 ſpots. Gods people are his husband-

ry*;

ry; the ploughing of the ground kills the weeds, and the harrowing of the earth breaks the hard clods: Gods ploughing of us by affliction, is to kill the weeds of ſinne; his harrowing of us, is to break the hard clods of impenitency, that the heart may be the fitter to receive the ſeeds of grace; and if this be all, why ſhould we be diſcontented?

4. Afflictions do both exerciſe and encreaſe grace.

Firſt, they *exerciſe* grace: affliction doth breath our graces; every thing is moſt in its excellency, when it is moſt in its exerciſe. Our grace, though it cannot be dead, yet it may be *aſleep*, & hath need of awakening. What a dull thing is the fire when it is hid in the embers, or the Sunne when it is maſqued with a cloud? a ſick man is *living*, but not *lively*; afflictions quicken and excite grace. God doth not love to ſee grace in the eclipſe. Now faith puts forth its

pureſt

pureſt and moſt noble acts in times of affliction: God makes the *fall of the leaf* the *ſpring* of our graces. What if we are more *paſſive*, if grace be more active?

2. Afflictions do *encreaſe* grace: as the winde ſerves to encreaſe & blow up the flame; ſo do the windy blaſts of affliction augment & blow up our graces: grace ſpends in the furnace, but it is like the *widows oyle in the cruſe*, which did encreaſe by pouring out. The torch when it is beaten, burns brighteſt, ſo doth grace when it is exerciſed by ſufferings. Sharp froſts nouriſh the good corne, ſo do ſharp afflictions grace; ſome plants grow better in the ſhade than in the Sun; as the *Bay* and the *Cypreſſe*. The ſhade of adverſitie is better for ſome than the Sun-ſhine of proſperitie. *Naturaliſts* obſerve, that the *Colewort* thrives better when it is watered with ſalt water than with freſh: So do ſome thrive better in the ſalt water of

of affliction; and shall we be discontented at that which makes us grow and fructifie more?

5. These afflictions do bring more of Gods immediate presence into the soul. When we are most assaulted, we shall be most assisted, *I will be with him in trouble**. It cannot be ill with that man with whom God is by his powerful presence in supporting, and his gracious presence in sweetning the present trial. God will be with us in trouble, not only to *behold* us, but to *uphold* us; as he was with *Daniel* in the *Lyons den*, and the three children *in the furnace*. What if we have more trouble than others, if we have more of God with us then others have? we never have sweeter smiles from Gods face than when the world begins to look strange; *Thy Statutes have been my songs*, where? not when I was upon the throne, but *in the house of my pilgrimage**. We read, *The Lord was not in the winde*,

* Psal. 91. 15

* Psal. 119. 54.

* 1 Kings 19. 11. *nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire* *; but in a metaphorical and spiritual sense: when the winde of affliction blows upon a Beleever, God is in the wind; when the fire of affliction kindles upon him, God is in the fire, *viz.* to sanctifie, to support, to sweeten. If God be with us, the furnace shall be turned into a festival, the prison into a Paradise, the earthquake into a joyful dance. Oh why should I be discontented, when I have more of Gods company?

6. These evils of affliction are for good, as they bring with them Certificates of Gods love, and are evidences of his special favour. Affliction is the Saints livery, 'tis a badge and cognizance of honour; That the God of glory should look upon a worm, and take so much notice of him, as to afflict him rather than lose him, is an high act of favour. Gods rod is *Sceptrum Regale*, a *Scepter of dignity*. *Job* calls Gods

Gods afflicting of us, *his magnifying* of us *. Some mens prosperity hath been their shame, when others affliction hath been their crown. *Job 7.17.

7. These afflictions work for our good, because they work for us *a far more exceeding weight of glory**, That which works for my glory in heaven, works for my good; we do not read in Scripture that any mans honour and riches do work for him *a weight of glory*, but afflictions do; and shall a man be discontented at that which works for his glory? The heavier the weight of affliction, the heavier the weight of glory; not that our sufferings do merit glory, (as the Papists do wickedly glosse;) but though they are not *causa*, they are *via*; they are not the cause of our crown, yet they are the way to it, and God makes us as he did our Captain, *perfect through sufferings* *; and shall not all this make us contented with our condition? Oh I beseech you, *2 Cor. 4. 16. *Heb. 2. 10

look not upon the *evil* of affliction, but the *good*. Afflictions in Scripture are called *visitations* *, the word in the Hebrew פקד, to *visit*, is taken in a *good* sense as well as a *bad*: Gods afflictions are but *friendly visits*; behold here Gods rod like *Aarons rod* blossoming, and *Jonathans rod*, it hath honey at the end of it. Poverty shall starve our sinnes*; the sickness of the body shall cure a sinsick soul: O then in stead of murmuring and being discontented, *bless the Lord*, hadst thou not met with such a rub in the way, thou mightest have gone to hell and never stopp'd.

*Job 7.18.

* *Felix paupertas, beata miseria.*

SECT. VII.

The seventh Argument to Contentation.

The next Argument to Contentment is, consider the evil of discontent,

tent, Male-content hath a mixture of grief and anger in it, and both theſe muſt needs raiſe a ſtorm in the ſoul. Have you not ſeen the poſture of a ſick man? ſometimes he will ſit upon his bed, by and by he will lye down, and when he is down, he is not quiet; firſt he turns on one ſide, and then on the other, he is reſtleſſe: this is juſt the embleme of a diſcontented ſpirit, the man is not ſick, yet he is never well; ſometimes he likes ſuch a condition of life, and when he hath it, yet he is not pleaſed, he is ſoon weary; and then another condition of life: this is *an evil under the Sun.*

Now the evil of diſcontent appears in three things.

1. The *ſordidneſſe* of it, it is unworthy of a Chriſtian. 1. *Evil of diſcontent.* 1.

Firſt, it is unworthy of his profeſſion. It was the ſaying of an Heathen; Bear thy condition quietly, *noſce te eſſe hominem*, know thou art

* *Per mansuete fortunam tuam, nosce te esse hominem.* Tull.

*a man**, So I say, Bear thy condition contentedly *nosce te esse Christianum*, know thou art *a Christian.* Thou professest to live by faith; what, and not content? Faith is a grace that doth substantiate *things* *Heb. 11. 1 *not seen**, faith looks beyond the creature, it feeds upon promises, faith lives not *by bread alone.* When the water is spent in the *bottle*, faith knowes whither to have recourse; now to see a Christian dejected in the want of visible supplies and recruits, where is faith? Oh, saith one, my estate in the world is down. I, and which is worse, thy faith is down. Wilt thou not be contented, unless God let down the vessel to thee, as he did to *Peter*, wherein were all manner of *beasts of the earth,* *Act. 10. 12 *and fowls of the aire**? must you have first and second course? This is like *Thomas*, *Unless I put my finger into* * John 20. 25. *the print of the nailes, I will not believe**. So, unless thou hast a sensible

ſible feeling of outward comforts, thou wilt not be content. True faith will *truſt* God where it cannot *trace* him, and will adventure upon Gods *bond* though it hath nothing in view. You who are diſcontented becauſe you have not all you would, let me tell you, either your faith is a *non entity*, or at beſt but an *embrio*; 'tis a *weak faith* that muſt have ſtilts and crutches to ſupport it. Nay, diſcontent is not only below faith, but below reaſon; why are you diſcontented? is it becauſe you are diſpoſſeſſed of ſuch comforts? well, and have you not reaſon to guide you? doth not reaſon tell you that you are but *tenants at will*? and may not God turn you out when he pleaſe? You hold not your eſtate *jure*, but *gratis*; not by a juridical right, but upon favour and courteſie.

2. It is unworthy of the *relation* we ſtand in to God; a Chriſtian is inveſted with the title and priviledge

*Eph. 1. 5. of *ſonſhip**; he is an heir of the promiſe: Oh conſider the lot of free-grace is fallen upon thee, thou art nearly allied to Chriſt, and of the blood royal; thou art advanced, in ſome ſenſe, above the Angels; *why then art thou, being the Kings Sonne,* *2 Sam. 13 *leane from day to day?* 2 Sam. 13.4. Why art *thou* diſcontented? Oh how unworthy is this? as if the heire to ſome great Monarch ſhould go pining up and down becauſe he may not pick ſuch a flower.

The ſecond evil of diſcontent. 2. Conſider the *ſinfulneſs* of it; which appears in three things,

The cauſes
The concomitants } of it.
The conſequences

I. 1. It is ſinful in the *cauſes*; which are theſe.

1. *Pride.* He that thinks highly of his deſerts, uſually eſteemes meanly of his condition; a diſcontented man

man is a proud man, he thinks himselfe *better* than others; therefore findes fault with the wisdom of God that he is not *above* others *. Thus the thing *formed* saith to him that *formed* it, *Why hast thou made me thus* *? Why am I not higher? Discontents are nothing else but the æstuations and boilings over of pride.

* *Nec quenquam jam ferre potest Cæsarve priorem Pompeiusve parem* --- Lucan. l. 1. Pharsal.

* Rom. 9. 20

2. The second cause of discontent is envy, which *Augustine* calls *vitium diabolicum*, the sin of the devil; Satan envied *Adam* the glory of Paradise, and the robe of innocency: he that envies what his neighbour hath, is never contented with that portion which Gods providence doth parcel out to him *; as envy stirs up *strife*, (this made the Plebeian faction so strong amongst the *Romans*) so it creates *discontent*; the envious man looks so much upon the blessings which another enjoys; that he

* *Fertilior seges est alienis semper in agris, Vicinumq; pecus grandius uber habet.* * Ovid.

he cannot see his own mercies, and so doth continually vex and torture himself. *Cain* envied that his brothers sacrifice was accepted, and his rejected; hereupon he was discontented, & presently murderous thoughts began to arise in his heart.

3. The third cause is *Covetousness*. This is a radical sin. Whence are vexing Law-suits, but from discontent? and whence is discontent, but from covetousnesse? *Covetousnesse* and *contentedness* cannot dwell in the same heart. *Avarice* is an *heluo*, that is never satisfied. The covetous man is like *Behemoth*; *behold, he drinketh up a river, he trusteth that he can draw up* Jordan *into his mouth* *. There are four things (saith *Solomon*) say, *It is not enough*. I may adde a fifth, *The heart of a covetous man*, he is still craving. Covetousnesse is like a Wolf in the brest, which is ever feeding; and because a man is not satisfied, he is never content.

* Job 40. 23

4. The

4. The fourth cauſe of Diſcontent is *Jealouſie*, which is ſometimes occaſion'd through melancholy, and ſometimes miſapprehenſion. The ſpirit of jealouſie cauſeth *this evil ſpirit*. Jealouſie *is the rage of man* *: and oft, this is nothing but *ſuſpicion* and *phanſie*; yet ſuch as creates real diſcontent. Prov. 6. 34

5. The fifth cauſe of Diſcontent is *diſtruſt*, which is a great degree of Atheiſme. The diſcontented perſon is ever diſtruſtful. *The bill of proviſion* growes low; I am in theſe ſtraits and exigencies, can God help me? *Can he prepare a table in the wilderneſſe?* ſure he cannot. My eſtate is exhauſted, can God recruit me? My friends are gone, can God raiſe me up more? ſure the arm of his power is ſhrunk. I am like the *dry fleece*, can any water come upon this fleece? *If the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be* *? Thus *the Anchor of hope*, and *1 King. 7. 2.

the

the ſhield of faith being caſt away, the ſoul goes pining up and down.

Diſcontent is nothing elſe but the *Echo* of unbelief: and remember, *diſtruſt* is worſe than *diſtreſs*.

2. 2. Diſcontent is evil in the concomitants of it, which are two.

1. Diſcontent is joyned with a *ſullen melancholy*; A Chriſtian of a right temper, ſhould be ever chearful in God; *Serve the Lord with gladneſs**. A ſigne the oyle of grace hath been poured into the heart, when *the oyle of gladneſs* ſhines in the countenance. Chearfulneſſe credits Religion; how can the diſcontented perſon be cheerful? Diſcontent is a dogged, ſullen humour; becauſe we have not what we deſire, God ſhall not have a good word or look from us; as the bird in the cage, becauſe ſhe is pent up, and cannot fly in the open aire, therefore beats her ſelf againſt the cage, and is ready to kill her ſelf. Thus that peeviſh Prophet

* Pſ. 100 2

phet; *I do well to be angry to the death**. *Jonah. 4.

2. Diſcontent is accompanied with *unthankfulneſs*; becauſe we have not all we deſire, we never minde the mercyes which we have: we deal with God as the widow of *Sarepta* did with the Prophet; the Prophet *Elijah* had been a means to keep her alive in the famine; for it was for his ſake, that her *meale in the barrel* and her *oyle in the cruſe* failed not; but aſſoon as ever her ſon dies, ſhe falls into a paſſion, and begins to quarrel with the Prophet; *What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come to call my ſin to remembrance, and to ſlay my ſon**? So ungratefully do we deal with God: we can be content to receive mercies from God; but if he doth croſſe us in the leaſt thing, then through diſcontent, we grow techy and impatient, and are ready to fly upon God; Thus God loſeth al his mercies*, * 1 Kings 17. 18.

cies *. We read in Scripture of the *thankoffering* *. The discontented person cuts God short of this; the Lord loseth his *thank-offering*. A discontented Christian repines in the midst of mercies, as *Adam*, who sin'd in the midst of *Paradise*. Discontent is a Spider that sucks the poyson of unthankfulnesse out of the sweetest flower of Gods blessings; and by a devilish chymistry extracts dross out of the most refined gold. The discontented person thinks every thing he doth for God too much, and every thing God doth for him too little. O what a sin is unthankfulnesse*! it is an accumulative sinne. What *Cicero* saith of *Parricide* *, I may say of *Ingratitude*; there are many sinnes bound up in this one sin; it is a voluminous wickednesse; and how full of this sinne is *Discontent*? A discontented Christian, because he hath not all the world, therefore dishonours

* Φαῦλος ἀνὴρ πίθος ἐστι τετρημμένος, εἰς ὃν ἁπάσας Ἀντλῶν τὰς χάριτας εἰς κενὸν ἐξέχεας. Lucian. Epigr. 2. Chro. 29. 30

* *Ingratus vitandus est ut dirũ scelus, nec cogitari pestilentius potest: nam tellus ipsa fœdius nihil creat.* Per. Trinitus. *lib.* 2. Poem.

* *Qui occidit patrem plurima committit peccata in uno.*

nours God with the mercies which he hath. God made *Eve* out of *Adams* rib, to be an *helper* (as the Father ſpeaks;) but the Devil made an arrow of this rib, and ſhot *Adam* to the heart: So doth diſcontent take the rib of Gods mercy and ungratefully ſhoot at him; Eſtate, Liberty ſhall be employed againſt God. Thus it is often-times. Behold then how Diſcontent and Ingratitude are interwoven and twiſted one within another: thus diſcontent is ſinful in its concomitants. Chryſoſt.

3. It is ſinful in its *Conſequences* which are theſe; 3. *Diſcontent is ſinful, in its conſequences.*

1. It makes a man very unlike the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God is a *meek Spirit*. The Holy Ghoſt deſcended in the likeneſſe of a *Dove**. A Dove is the embleme of meekneſſe; A diſcontented ſpirit is not a meek ſpirit. 1. *Mat. 3. 16.

2. It makes a man like the Devil. The Devil being ſwell'd with the 2.

poyſon

poison of envy and malice, is never content: Just so is the Male-content. The Devil is an unquiet spirit,
*1 Pet. 5. 8. he is still *walking about**; 'tis his rest to be walking. And herein is the discontented person like him; for he goes up and down vexing himself, *Seeking rest, and finding none*; he is the Devils picture.

3. 3. Discontents disjoynts the soul, it untunes the heart for duty; *Is any*
* Jam. 5. 13. *man afflicted, let him pray**. But, is any man *discontented?* how shall he pray? *Lift up pure hands without*
*1 Tim. 5. 8 *wrath**. Discontent is full of wrath and passion; The Male-content cannot lift up pure hands; he lifts up *leprous hands*, he poisons his prayers; will God accept of a poison'd sacrifice? *Chrysostome* compares prayer to a fine Garland; Those, saith he, that make a Garland, their hands had need be clean; Prayer is a precious Garland, the heart that makes it had need be clean, Discontent throws poison

poyson into the spring, (which was death among the *Romans*;) Discontent puts the heart into a disorder and mutiny, and such a one cannot serve the Lord *without distraction.*

4. Discontent sometimes unfits for the very use of reason; *Jonah* in a passion of discontent, spake no better than blasphemy, and non-sense; I *do well*, saith he, *to be angry to the death**. What? to be angry with God? and to dye for anger? sure he did not know well what he said. When discontent transports, then like *Moses*, we speak *unadvisedly with our lips.* This humour doth even suspend the very acts of reason.

* Jona 4. 8

5. Discontent doth not only disquiet a mans self, but those who are neer him. This evil spirit troubles *Families, Parishes, &c.* If there be but one string out of tune, it spoiles all the musick. One discontented spirit makes jarrings and discords a-

mong others. 'Tis this ill humour that breeds quarrels and Law-ſuits. Whence is all our *Contention*, but for want of *Contentation*? From whence
*Jam.4.1. *come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence even of your luſts**? in particular from this *luſt* of Diſcontent? Why did *Abſalom* raiſe a war againſt his Father, and would have taken off not only his *Crown*, but his *Head*? was it not his diſcontent? *Abſalom* would be King. Why did *Ahab* ſtone *Naboth*? was it not diſcontent about the Vine-yard? Oh this devil of Diſcontent! Thus you have ſeen the ſinfulneſſe of it.

3. Conſider the ſimplicity of it. I may ſay as the Pſalmiſt, *Surely they are diſquieted in vaine** : which appears thus.

The ſimplicity of it.
*Pſal.39.6

2. Is it not a vain ſimple thing to be troubled at the loſſe of that which is in its own nature periſhing and changeable? God hath put a viciſſitude

ſitude into the creature; all the world rings changes; and for me to meet with inconſtancy here, to loſe a friend, eſtate, to be in a conſtant fluctuation, is no more than to ſee a flower wither, or a leaf drop off in Autumne. There is an *Autumn* upon every comfort, a *fall of the leaf*; Now it is extream folly to be diſcontented at the loſſe of thoſe things which are in their own nature loſeable. What *Solomon* ſaith of *Riches*, is true of all things under the Sunne, *They take wings*. *Noahs* Dove brought an Olive-branch in its mouth; but preſently flew out of the Ark, and never returned more: Such a comfort brings to us honey in its mouth; but it hath wings; and to what purpoſe ſhould we be troubled, unleſſe we had wings to flie after and overtake it?

2. Diſcontent is an heart-breaking; *by ſorrow of the heart the ſpirit is broken* *; it takes away the * Prov. 15. 13.

comfort of life. There is none of us but have many mercies if we can ſee them; now becauſe we have not all we deſire, therefore we will loſe the comfort of that which we have already. *Jonah* having his Gourd ſmitten (a withering vanity,) was ſo diſcontented, that he never thought of his miraculous deliverance out of the Whales belly; he takes no comfort of his life, but wiſheth that he might dye. What folly is this? we muſt have all or none; herein we are like children, that throw away the piece which is cut them, becauſe they may have no bigger. Diſcontent eates out the comfort of life. Beſides, it were well if it were ſeriouſly weighed how prejudicial this is, even to our health: For diſcontent, as it doth diſcruciate the minde, ſo it doth pine the body; it frets as a moth, and by waſting the ſpirits, weakens the vitals; The pluriſie of Diſcontent brings the body into

into a conſumption; and is not this Folly?

3. Diſcontent does not eaſe us of our burden, but makes the croſſe heavier. A contented ſpirit goes chearfully under its affliction. Diſcontent makes our grief as unſupportable, as it is unreaſonable. If the leg be well, it can endure a fetter, and not complain; but if the leg be ſore, then the fetter troubles. Diſcontent of minde is the *ſore* that makes the Fetters of affliction more grievous. Diſcontent troubles us more than the trouble it ſelfe, it ſteeps the affliction in worm-wood. When Chriſt was upon the Croſſe, the Jewes brought him *gall and vinegar* to drink, that it might adde to his ſorrow. Diſcontent brings to a man in affliction gall and vinegar to drink; this is worſe than the affliction it ſelf. Is it not folly for a man to imbitter his own croſſe?

4. Diſcontent ſpins out our

troubles the longer. A Chriſtian is diſcontented becauſe he is in want; and therefore he is in want, becauſe he is diſcontented; he murmurs becauſe he is afflicted; and therefore he is afflicted, becauſe he murmurs. Diſcontent doth delay and adjourn our mercies. God deales herein with us as we uſe to do with our children: when they are quiet and cheerful, they ſhall have any thing; but if we ſee them cry and fret, then we with-hold from them: We get nothing from God by our diſcontent, but blows. The more the child ſtruggles, the more it is beaten: When we ſtruggle with God by our ſinful paſſions, he doubles and trebles his ſtroaks; God will tame our curſt hearts. What got *Iſrael* by their peeviſhneſſe? they were within eleven days journey of *Canaan*, and now they were diſcontented, and began to murmur; God leads them a march of fourty years long in the wilder-

wilderneſſe. Is it not folly for us to adjourn our own mercies? Thus you have ſeen the evil of diſcontent. I have been long upon this Argument; but *nunquam nimis dicitur, quod nunquam ſatis diſcitur.*

SECT. VIII.

The eighth Argument to Contentation.

The next Argument or Motive to Contentment is this; why is not a man content with the competency which he hath? perhaps if he had more, he would be leſſe content; covetouſneſſe is a dry drunkenneſſe. The world is ſuch, that the more we *have*, the more we *crave**; it cannot fill the heart of man. When the fire burnes, how do you quench it? not by pouring oyle on the flame, or laying on more wood, but by withdraw-

* *Creſcit amor nummi quantum ipſa pecunia creſcit.*

ing the fuel. When the appetite is enflam'd after riches, how may a man be ſatisfied? not by having juſt what he deſires, but by withdrawing the *fuel*, &c. moderating and leſſening his deſires. He that is contented hath enough. A man in a fever or dropſie, thirſts; how do you ſatisfie him? not by giving him liquid things which will enflame his thirſt the more, but by removing the cauſe, and ſo curing his diſtemper. The way for a man to be contented, is not by raiſing his eſtate higher, but by bringing his heart lower.

SECT. IX.

The ninth Argument to Contentation.

The next Argument to Contentment is, *The ſhortneſſe of life.* It is but

but *a vapour*, ſaith *James* *. ὁ βίος τρέχος *, life is a wheele ever running. The Poets painted time with wings, to ſhew the volubility and ſwiftneſs of it. *Job* compares it to a *ſwift Poſt*, *(our life rides poſt) and to a *day*, not a *year*. It is indeed like a *day*. Infancy is as it were the *day break*. *Youth* is the Sun-riſing, *full growth* is the Sun in the Meridian, *old age* is Sun-ſetting. *Sickneſs* is the *evening*, then comes the *night* of death. How quickly is this day of life ſpent? often times this Sun goes down at noone-day; life ends before the evening of old age comes; Nay, ſometimes the Sun of life ſets preſently after Sun-riſing. Quickly after the dawning of Infancy, the night of death approaches. Oh, how ſhort is the life of man! The conſideration of the brevity of life may work the heart to contentment. Remember thou art to be here but a day; *parum viæ, quid multùm viatici?* thou haſt but

* Jam. 4. 14
* Πνεῦμα καὶ σκιὰ. *Sophocles.* * *Phocylli-des.*
* Job 9. 25

but a ſhort way to go, & what needs a long proviſion for a ſhort way *? if a Traveller hath but enough to bring him to his journies end, he deſires no more. We have but a day to live, & perhaps we may be in the twelfth houre of the day; why, if God give us but enough to bear our charges till night, it is ſufficient. Let us be content. If a man had the leaſe of an houſe or farme, but for two or three dayes, and he ſhould fall a building and planting, would he not be judged very indiſcreet? So when we have but a ſhort time here, and death calls us preſently off the ſtage, to thirſt immoderately after the world, and pull down our ſouls to build up an eſtate, is it not extream folly? Therefore as *Eſau* ſaid once in a *profane ſenſe* concerning his birth-right; *Lo, I am at the point to die, and what profit ſhall this birth-right do to me?* So let a Chriſtian ſay in a *Religious ſenſe*; Lo, I am even

* *Quid opus eſt ad brevem vitam longis opibus.* Hyper.

even at the point of death, my grave is going to be made, and what good will the world do me? If I have but enough till *Sun-ſetting*, I am content.

SECT. X.

The tenth Argument to Contentation.

The tenth Argument or Motive to Contentment is; Conſider ſeriouſly the nature of a proſperous condition. There are in a proſperous eſtate three things.

1. *Plus moleſtiæ*, more trouble. Many who have abundance of all things to enjoy, yet have not ſo much content and ſweetneſs in their lives, as ſome that go to their hard labour. Sad, ſolicitous thoughts do often attend a proſperous condition. *Care* is the *malus genius*, or evil

1. *Plus moleſtiæ.*

vil ſpirit which haunts the rich man, and will not ſuffer him to be quiet. When his cheſt is full of gold, his heart is full of care, either how to *manage*, or how to *encreaſe*, or how to *ſecure* what he hath gotten. Oh the troubles and perplexities that do waite upon proſperity! The worlds high ſeats are very uneaſie; Sun-ſhine is pleaſant, but ſometimes it ſcorcheth with its heat; the Bee gives honey, but ſometimes it ſtings: Proſperity hath its ſweetneſſe, and alſo its ſting. *Competency with Contentment is farre more eligible.* Never did *Jacob* ſleep better than when he had the heavens for his Canopy, & an hard ſtone for his pillow. A large voluminous eſtate is but like a long trailing garment, which is more troubleſome than uſeful.

2. *Plus ſe vtculi.*

2. In a proſperous condition there is *plus periculi*, more danger, and that two wayes.

First, *Ex parte ipſius*, in reſpect of

of a mans ſelf. The rich mans *Table is oft his ſnare*; he is ready to ingulph himſelfe too deep in theſe ſweet waters*. In this ſenſe it is hard to know how to *abound*. It muſt be a ſtrong braine that beares heady wine; he had need have much wiſdome and grace that knows how to bear an high condition; either he is ready to kill himſelfe with care, or ſurfet himſelfe upon luſcious delights. Oh the hazard of *honour*, the damage of dignity! Pride, ſecurity, rebellion, are the three wormes that breed of plenty*. The paſtures of proſperity are ranke and ſurfeting. How ſoon are we broken upon the ſoft pillow of eaſe*? Proſperity is often a *trumpet* that ſounds a *retreat*, it calls men off from the purſuit of Religion. The Sun of Proſperity oft dulls, and puts out the fire of zeale. How many ſouls hath the *pluriſie* of abundance kill'd*? They that *will be rich*, fall into

* *Magnæ fœlicitatis eſt à fœlicitate non vinci.* Aug. *de verb. Dom. c.* 13

* Deut. 32. 15.

* πλείος γὰρ ἡ περίσσεια ἐκτραχηλίζει ἢ ἡ ἐνδεία. *Theophilact.*

* *Plurimi ſunt qui*

into snares *. The world is bird-lime at our feet, it is full of *golden sands*, but they are *quicksands*. Prosperity like smooth *Jacob*, will supplant and betray; a great estate without much vigilancy will be a thief to rob us of heaven; such as are upon the pinacle of honour, are in most danger of falling.

paupertate positi non habent patientiam; & qui abundantiâ, non habent temperantiam. Remigius.

* 1 Tim. 6 10.

Sæpiùs ventis agitatur ingens
Pinus, & celsæ graviore casu
Decidunt turres, feriúntque summos
Fulmina montes, &c.
Hor. *carm.* l. 2. *ode* 10.

A lower estate is lesse hazardous. The little Pinnace rides safe by the Shore, when the gallant Ship advancing with its mast and top-sail, is cast away. *Homo victus in Paradiso, victor in stercore.* *Adam* in Paradise was overcome, when *Job* on the dung-hill was a conquerour. *Samson* fell asleep on *Delilahs* lap: Some have

have fallen ſo faſt aſleep on the lap of eaſe and plenty, that they have never awaked till they have been in hell*. The worlds *fawning* is worſe than its *frowning*; and it is more to be feared when it ſmiles, than when it thunders*. Proſperity in Scripture is compared to a candle: *Job 29. 3. When his candle ſhined upon my head.* How many have burnt their wings about this candle! *Segetem ubertas nimia ſternit, rami onere franguntur, ad maturitatem non pervenit nimia fœcunditas**: The corne being over-ripe ſheds, and fruit when it mellows, begins to rot; When men do mellow with the Sun of Proſperity, commonly their ſouls begin to rot in ſin. *How hard is it for a rich man to enter into the Kingdome of Heaven**? His golden weights keep him from aſcending up *the hill of God*; and ſhall we not be content, though we are placed in a lower Orbe? What if we are not in

* *Turpi fregerunt ſæcula luxu Divitiæ molles &c.* Juvenal. 6. Satyr.

* *Periculoſior eſt rumdies blandiens quàm fulminans.* Aug.

* Sen. ad Lucilium Ep. 80.

* Luk. 18. 24.

in ſo much bravery, and gallantry as others: we are not in ſo much danger; as we want the honour of the world, ſo the temptations. Oh the abundance of danger that is in abundance! We ſee by common experience, that *Lunaticks*, when the Moone is declining and in the wane, are ſober enough; but when it is in the full, they are more wilde and exorbitant: When mens eſtates are in the wane, they are more ſerious about their ſouls, more humble; but when it is the *full of the Moon*, and they have abundance, then their hearts beginne to ſwell with their eſtates, and are ſcarce themſelves. Thoſe that write concerning the ſeverall *Climates*, obſerve, that ſuch as live in the Northern parts of the world, if you bring them into the South part, they loſe their ſtomacks, and dye quickly; but thoſe that live in the more Southerne hot climates, bring them into the North,

North, and their ſtomacks mend, and they are long-lived: Give me leave to apply it; bring a man from the cold ſtarving climate of poverty, into the hot ſouthern climate of proſperity, and he begins to loſe his appetite to good things, he growes weak, and a thouſand to one if all his Religion doth not die; but bring a Chriſtian from the South to the North, from a rich flouriſhing eſtate into a jejune low condition, let him come into a more cold and hungry air, and then his ſtomack mends, he hath better appetite after heavenly things, he hungers more after Chriſt, he thirſts more for grace, he eats more at one meal of the bread of life then at ſix before; this man is now like to live and hold out in his Religion; be content then with a *modicum*; if you have but enough to pay for your paſſage to heaven, it ſufficeth.

2. A proſperous condition is

dangerous *ex parte vicini*, in regard of others: a great estate for the most part drawes * envy to it *, whereas *in parvis quies*. *David a shepheard* was quiet; but *David a Courtier* was pursued by his enemyes: envy cannot endure a superiour; an envious man knowes not how to live, but upon the ruines of his neighbour; he raiseth himself higher by bringing others lower. Prosperity is an eye-sore to many. Such sheep as have most wool are sooneſt fleec'd. The barren tree growes peaceably; no man meddles with the Ash or Willow; but the Apple-tree and the Damasin shall have many rude suitors. Oh then be content to carry a lesser saile; he that hath lesse *revennes*, hath lesse *envy*; such as bear the fairest frontispiece, and make the greatest shew in the world, are the *white* for envy and malice to shoot at.

* Gen. 26. 12. 13, 14.

* *Fœlicitas semper subjecta est invidiæ.* Laert. Diogenes *de vit. Philos.*

3. *Plus recensioni.*

3. A prosperous condition hath

in

in it *plus recenſionis*, a greater reckoning; every man muſt be reſponſible for his talents. Thou that haſt great poſſeſſions in the world, doſt thou trade thy eſtate for Gods glory? Art thou *rich in good works?* Art thou a κοινὸν ἀγαθὸν; Grace makes a *private perſon* a *common good*. Doſt thou diſburſe thy mony for publick uſes? it is lawful (in this ſenſe) to put out our money to uſe. Oh let us all remember an eſtate is a *depoſitum*: we are but ſtewards, and our Lord and Maſter will ere long ſay, *Give an account of your ſtewardſhip*: the greater our eſtate, the greater *our charge*; the more our revenues, the more our reckonings. You that have a leſſer mill going in the world, be content, God will expect leſſe from you, where he hath ſowed more ſparingly.

SECT. XI.

The eleventh Argument to Contentation.

The eleventh Argument is the example of thoſe who have been eminent for Contentation. *Examples* are uſually more forcible then *Precepts*. *Abraham* being call'd out to hot ſervice, and ſuch as was againſt fleſh and blood, was content. God
*Gen. 22. 2. bids him offer up his ſonne *Iſaac* *; this was a great work: *Iſaac* was *filius ſenectutis*, the ſonne of his old age; *filius dilectionis*, the ſonne of his love; *filius promiſſi*, the ſonne of the promiſe: Chriſt the Meſſiah was to come of his line, *In Iſaac ſhall thy ſeed be bleſſed*; ſo that to offer up *Iſaac* ſeem'd not onely to oppoſe *Abrahams* reaſon, but his *faith* too; for if *Iſaac* die, the world (for ought he knew)

knew) must be without a Mediatour. Besides, if *Isaac* be sacrificed, was there no other hand to do it but *Abrahams*? must the Father needs be the executioner? must he that was the instrument of giving *Isaac* his being, be the instrument of taking it away? yet *Abraham* doth not dispute or hesitate, but believes *against hope*, and is content with Gods prescription. So, when God call'd him to *leave his country**, he was content. Some would have argued thus: what? leave all my friends, my native soile, my brave situation, and go turn pilgrim? *Abraham* is content: besides, *Abraham* went blindfold, *he knew not whether he went**. God held him in suspense, he must go wander he knows not where; and when he doth come to the place God had laid out for him, he knows not what oppositions he shall meet with there; the world doth seldome cast a favourable aspect upon strangers*,

*Heb. 11. 8

*Verse 8.

*Gen. 31. 15.

yet he is content, and obeyes; *He so-*
*Heb. 11. 9 *journed in the land of promise**; behold a little his pilgrimage. First, he goes to *Charran*, a City in *Mesopotamia*; when he had sojourned there a while, his father dies; then he removes to *Sichem*, then to *Bethlem* in *Canaan*; *there* a famine ariseth; *then* he went down to *Egypt*; after that he returns into *Canaan*; when he came there ('tis true, he had a promise) but he found nothing to answer expectation; he had not there one foot of land, but was an exile: in this time of his sojourning he buried his wife; & as for his dwellings he had no sumptuous buildings, but led his life in poor cottages: all this was enough to have broken any mans heart. *Abraham* might think thus with himself, Is this the land I must possesse? here is no probability of any good; *all things are against me*; wel, is he discontented? no; God saith to him, *Abraham* go, leave thy Country; and this word

was

was enough to lead him all the world over; he is presently upon his march; here was a man had learned to be content. But let us descend a little lower, to Heathen * *Zeno* (of whom *Seneca* speaks) who had once been very rich, hearing of a ship-wrack, and that all his goods were drowned at Sea; Fortune, saith he (he spake in an Heathen dialect) hath dealt wel with me, and would have me now to study Philosophy*; he was content to change his course of life, to leave off being a Merchant, and turn Philosopher. And if an Heathen said thus, shall not a Christian much more say, when the world is drained from him, *Iubet Deus mundum derelinquere, & Christum expeditiùs sequi*, God would have me leave off following the world, and study Christ more, and how to get to Heaven? Do I see an Heathen contented, and a Christian disquieted*? How did Heathens vilifie those things which Christians

* Socrates *Philosopherum lutelentissimus pauper semper, nudis pedibus incedens, sordido palliolo contentus, honores omniaque terrena contemnens* Plut.

* *Iubet me fortuna expeditius Philosophari.* Seneca.

* *Pudeat, pudeat illos nomine tenus Christianos quibus quod ad hanc remanserint, Ethnici rectiùs fuerunt.* Hyperius.

magnifie? though they knew not God, or what true happineſs meant, yet would ſpeak very ſublimely of a *Numen* or Deity, and of the life to come, as *Ariſtotle* and *Plato*; and for thoſe Elizian delights which they did but phanſie, they undervalued and contemned the things here below; it was the doctrine they taught their Scholars, and which ſome of them practiſed, that *men ſhould ſtrive to be contented with a little*; they were willing to make an exchange; to have leſſe gold, and more learning: and ſhall not we be content then to have leſſe of the world, ſo we may have more of Chriſt? May not Chriſtians bluſh to ſee Heathens content with a *viaticum*, ſo much as would recruit nature, and to ſee themſelves ſo tranſported with the love of earthly things? that if they begin a little to abate, and the *bill of proviſion* grows ſhort, they murmur, and are like *Micah*, *Have ye taken away*

my

*my gods, and do you ask me what I ail**? have Heathens gone ſo farre in contentation? and is it not ſad for us to come ſhort of them that came ſhort of Heaven? Theſe *Heroes* of their time, how did they embrace death it ſelf? *Socrates* died in priſon, *Hercules* was burnt alive, *Cato* (whom *Seneca* calls, * the lively image and portraiture of vertue) thruſt through with a ſword; but how bravely, and with what contentment of ſpirit did they die? ſhall I, ſaith *Seneca*, weep for *Cato*, or *Regulus*, or the reſt of thoſe Worthies that died with ſo much valour and patience? Did not croſſe providences make them to alter their countenance? and do I ſee a Chriſtian appalled and amaz'd? Did not death affright them? and doth it diſtract us? did the ſpring-head of Nature riſe ſo high? and ſhall not Grace, like the *waters of the Sanctuary*, riſe higher? We that pretent to live by faith may

* Judg. 18. 24.

* *virtutum viva imago* Sen.

may we not go to School to them who had no other Pilot but reason to guide them? Nay, let me come a step lower, to creatures void of reason; we see every creature is contented with its allowance; the beasts with their provender, the birds with their nests, they live onely upon providence; and shall we make our selves below them? let a Christian go to School to the Oxe and the Asse, to learn contentednesse; we think we never have enough, and are still laying up; the Fowles of the aire do not lay up; *they reap not, nor gather into barnes**; it is an argument which Christ brings to make Christians contented with their condition; The birds do not lay up, yet they are provided for, and are contented; *Are ye not* (saith Christ) *much better then they?* but if you are discontented, are ye not much worse then they? let these examples quicken us.

* Mat. 6. 26.

SECT.

SECT. XII.

The twelfth Argument to Contentation.

The twelfth Argument to Contentment is, Whatever change or trouble a child of God meets with, it is all the hell he ſhall have. Whatever eclipſe may be upon his name, or eſtate, I may ſay of it as *Athanaſius* of his baniſhment, it is *nubecula citò tranſitura*, a little cloud which will ſoon be blown over, and then his gulf is ſhot, his hell is paſt;

Aibus ut obſcuro detergit nubila cælo
Sæpe Notus, neque parturit imbres
Perpetuos; ſic tu Sapiens finire memento
Triſtitiam, Hor. *Ode* 7. l. 1.

Death begins a wicked mans hel, but it puts an end to a godly mans hell.

Think

Think with thy ſelf, what if I endure this? it is but a *temporary hell*; indeed if all our hell be here, it is but an eaſie hell. What is the cup of affliction to the cup of Damnation? *Lazarus* could not get a crumb; he was ſo diſeaſed, that the dogs took pity on him, and (as if they had been his phyſicians) *licked his ſores*; but this was an eaſie hell, the *Angels* quickly fetch'd him out of it. If all our hell be in this life, in the midſt of this hell we may have the love of God, and then it is no more *Hell* but *Paradiſe*. If our hell be here, we may ſee to the *bottome* of it, it is but skin-deep, it cannot touch the ſoul, & we may ſee to the *end* of it: 'tis an hell that is ſhort-liv'd*: After a wet night of affliction comes a bright morning of the Reſurrection; if our lives are ſhort, our trials cannot be long. As our *riches* take *wings* and flie, ſo do our *ſufferings*; then let us be contented.

* *Nocte pluit tota, redeunt ſpectacula manè.*

SECT.

SECT. XIII.

The thirteenth Argument to Contentation.

The laſt Argument to contentment is this, To have a *competency*, and to want *Contentment*, is a great judgement. For a man to have an huge ſtomak*, that whatever meat you give him, he is ſtill craving, and never ſatisfied; you uſe to ſay, this is a great judgement upon the man: Thou who art *heluo pecuniæ*, a devourer of money, and yet never haſt enough, but ſtill crieſt, *Give, give*, this is a ſad judgement; *They ſhall eat, and not have enough**. The *throat* of a malicious man is an open *Sepulchre**, ſo is the heart of a covetous man. Covetouſneſſe is not onely *malum culpæ*, but *malum pœnæ*; it is not onely a *ſinne*, but the

* *Caninum appetitum.*

* Hoſ. 4. 10.

* Rom. 3. 13.

the *puniſhment* of a ſin. 'Tis a ſecret curſe upon a covetous perſon, he ſhal thirſt, and thirſt, and never be ſatisfied; *He that loveth ſilver, ſhall not be* *Eccl. 5. 10 *ſatisfied with ſilver**, and is not this a curſe? what was it but a ſevere judgment upon the people of *Judah? Ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink,* *Hag. 1. 6. *but ye are not filled with drink**. Oh let us take heed of this *plague*. Did *Eſau* *Gen. 33. 9. * אחי רב יש־לי ſay to his brother, *I have abundance**, my brother, *or as we tranſlate it, *I have enough*: and ſhal not a Chriſtian ſay ſo much more? 'Tis ſad that our hearts ſhould be ſo dead to heavenly things, and as a ſponge to ſuck in earthly. Let all that hath been ſaid, work our mindes to holy Contentation.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Three things inserted by way of Caution.

IN the next place I come to lay down some necessary Cautions: Though (I say) a man should be contented in every estate; yet there are three estates in which he must not be contented. *Caution* 1.

1. He must not be contented in a *natural estate*; here he must learn not to be content. A sinner in his pure naturals is under *the wrath of God**, and shall he be content, when that dreadful Vial is going to be poured out? is it nothing to be under the scorchings of divine fury? *Who can dwell with everlasting burnings?* A sinner as a sinner, is *under the power of Satan**, and shall he in *this estate* be contented? who would be contented *Joh. 3. 18

*Acts 26. 18.

to

to ſtay in the enemies quarters? while we ſleep in the lap of ſinne, the Devil doth to us as the *Philiſtines* did to *Sampſon*, cut the lock of our
*2Cor.4.4 ſtrength, and put out our eyes *; be not content, O ſinner in this eſtate. For a man to be in debt body and ſoul, in fear every hour to be arreſted and carried priſoner to hell, ſhall he now be content? here I preach againſt contentation. Oh get out of this condition; I would haſten you out of it, as the Angel haſtened *Lot*
*Gen. 19. 15. out of *Sodom** ; there is the ſmell of the fire and brimſtome upon you. The longer a man ſtayes in his ſinne, the more ſinne doth ſtrengthen *; 'tis hard to get out of ſin when the heart as a garriſon is victualled and fortified. A young plant is eaſily removed; but when the tree is once rooted, there is no ſtirring of it: thou who

*Heb. 3.13. *Vincere con uetudinem eſt dura pugna.* Aug.

*Τὰμὴ καθαρὰ τῶν σωμάτων ὁκόσον ἂν θρέψῃς, μᾶλλον βλάψεις. Hippocr. l. 2. Aphor. 9.

who art rooted in thy pride, unbelief, impenitency, it will coſt thee many a ſad pull ere thou art plucked out of thy *natural eſtate**. 'Tis an hard thing to have a brazen face & a broken heart. *He travelleth with iniquity**, *Pſal.* 7. 14. Be aſſured the longer you travel with your ſinnes, the more and the ſharper pangs you muſt expect in the *new-birth*. Oh be not contented with your natural eſtate. *David* ſaith, *Why art thou diſquieted O my ſoul**? but a ſinner ſhould ſay to himſelf, Why art thou not diſquieted, O my ſoul? why is it that thou layeſt afflictions ſo to heart, and canſt not lay ſin to heart? 'Tis a mercy when we are diſquieted about ſinne; a man had better be at the trouble of ſetting a bone, then to be lame, and in pain all his life; bleſſed is that trouble that brings the ſoul to Chriſt. 'Tis one of the worſt ſights to ſee a bad conſcience quiet; of the two, better is a fever, then a

* Jer. 6. 16.

* Pſa. 7. 14.

* Pſa. 43. 5.

lethargy. I wonder to ſee a man in his natural eſtate content; what? contentent to go to hell?

Caution 2. 2. Though in regard of externals a man ſhould be in every ſtate content, yet he muſt not be content in ſuch a condition wherein God is apparently diſhonoured. If a mans trade be ſuch that he can hardly uſe it, but he muſt treſpaſſe upon a Command (and ſo *make a trade of ſinne*) he muſt not content himſelf in ſuch a condition; God never called any man to ſuch a calling as is ſinful; a man in this caſe had better knock off and divert; better loſe ſome of his gain, ſo he may leſſen ſome of his guilt. So for ſervants that live in *a profane Family* (the ſuburbs of hell) where the Name of God is not called upon, unleſs when it is taken in vain; they are not to content themſelves in ſuch a place, they are to come *out of the Tents of theſe ſinners*; there is a double danger in living among the prophane. 1. Leſt

1. Leſt we come to be infected with the poiſon of their ill example. *Joſeph* living in *Pharaohs* Court, had learned to *ſwear by the life of Pharaoh**. We are prone to ſuck in example*, men take in deeper impreſſions by the *eye*, then by the ear. *Dives* was a bad patterne, and he had many brethren that ſeeing him ſinne, trode juſt in his ſteps; therefore ſaith he, I pray thee ſend him *to my Fathers houſe*; *for I have five brethren: that he may teſtifie to them, that they come not into this place of torment.* *Dives* knew which way they went; it is eaſie to catch a diſeaſe from another, but not to catch health. The bad will ſooner *corrupt* the good, then the good will *convert* the bad; take an equal quantity and proportion, ſo much ſweet wine with ſo much ſower vineger; the vineger will ſooner ſower the wine, then the wine will ſweeten the vineger. Sinne is compared to the

* Gen. 42. 15.

* *Vivitur exemplis magis quam legibus.*

* Luk. 16. 27, 28.

*plague**, and to *leaven**, to ſhew of what a ſpreading nature it is. A bad maſter makes a bad ſervant. *Iacobs* cattle by looking on the rods which were ſpeckled, and ring-ſtrak'd conceived like the rods: We do as we ſee others *before* us, eſpecially *above* us. If the head be ſick, the other parts of the body are diſtempered. If the Sunne ſhine not upon the mountaines, it muſt needs ſet in the valleys. We pray, *Lead us not into temptation*; and do we lead our ſelves into temptation? *Lot* was the worlds miracle, who kept himſelf freſh in *Sodoms* ſalt water.

* 1 Kings 8. 38.
* 1 Cor. 5. 7

2. By living in an evil Family, we are liable to incurre their puniſhment; *Powr out thy wrath upon the families that call not upon thy Name**. For want of pouring out Prayer, the wrath of God was ready to be poured out. 'Tis dangerous living in the *Tents of Kedar*. When God ſends his *flying roll*, written within

* Jer. 10. 25

and without with curſes, it enters *into the houſe of the thief and perjurer, and it conſumes the timber and the ſtones thereof**. Is it not of ſad conſequence to live in a prophane perjur'd Family, when the ſin of the Governour pulls his houſe about his ears? if the ſtone and timber be deſtroyed, how ſhall the ſervant eſcape? And ſuppoſe God ſend not a *temporal roll* of curſes in the family, there is a *ſpiritual roll*, and that is worſe *. Be not content to live where Religion dies. *Salute the brethren, and* Nymphas, *and the Church which is in his houſe**; the houſe of the godly is a *little Church*, the houſe of the wicked a *little hell**. Oh incorporate your ſelves into a religious Family; the houſe of a good man is perfum'd with a bleſſing*. When the holy oyl of grace is poured on the head, the *ſavour* of this ointment ſweetly diffuſeth it ſelf, and the *vertue* of it runs down upon the skirts

*Zach. 5. 4

*Pro. 3. 33

*Col. 4. 15

*Pro. 7. 27

*Pro. 3. 33

of the family. Pious examples are very magnetical and forcible. *Seneca* ſaid to his ſiſter, Though I leave you not wealth, yet I will leave you a good example. Let us ingraffe our ſelves among the Saints; by being often among the ſpices, we come to ſmell of them.

3. *Caution* 3. The third Caution is, though in every condition we muſt be content, yet we are not to content our ſelves with a *little grace*. Grace is the *beſt bleſſing*. Though we ſhould be contented with a competency of eſtate, yet not with a competency of grace. It was the end of Chriſts Aſcenſion to heaven, *to give gifts*; and the end of thoſe gifts, *that we may grow up into him who is the head, Chriſt* *. Where the Apoſtle diſtinguiſheth between our *being* in Chriſt, and our *growing* in him; our ingraffing, and our flouriſhing: be not content with a *modicum* in Religion.

* Epheſ. 4. 15.

'Tis not enough that there be *life*, but

but there must be *fruit*. Barrennesse in the Law was accounted a curse. The farther we are from fruit, the nearer we are to cursing*. 'Tis a sad thing when men are fruitful onely *in the unfruitful works of darknesse*. Be not content with a dram or two of grace; next to a *still-borne*, a *starveling* in Christ is worst. Oh covet more grace, never think thou hast enough; it is *bona & Honesta avaritia* we are bid to *covet the best things**: it is an heavenly ambition, when we desire to be high in Gods favour; a blessed contention, when all the strife is, who shall be most holy. Saint *Paul*, though he was content with a little of the world, yet not with a little grace; he *reached forward*, and *presséd towards the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus**. A true Christian is a *wonder*, he is the most contented, and yet the least satisfied: he is contented with a morsel of

* Heb 6.8.

* 1 Cor. 12.

* Phil. 3. 13, 14.

bread, & a little water in the Cruſe, yet never ſatisfied with grace; he doth *anhelare*, pant and breath after more; this is his prayer, Lord, more conformity *to* Chriſt, more communion *with* Chriſt; he would fain have Chriſts Image more lively pictured upon his ſoul. True grace is alwayes progreſſive: as the Saints are called *Lamps* and *Starres* in regard of their *light*; ſo
*Iai.61.3. *trees of righteouſneſſe* * for their growth; they are indeed like the tree of life, bringing forth ſeveral ſorts of fruit.

A true Chriſtian grows, 1. *Formâ, in beauty.* Grace is the beſt complexion of the ſoul; it is at the firſt plantation like *Rachel*, fair to look upon; but ſtill the more it lives, the more it ſends forth its rayes of beauty. *Abrahams* faith was at firſt beautiful; but at laſt it did ſhine in its orient colours, and grew ſo illuſtrious, that God himſelf was in love with

with it, and makes his faith a pattern to all Beleevers.

2. A true Christian growes *Suavitate*, in sweetnesse. A poisonful weed may grow as much as the Hyssop, or Rose-mary; the Poppy in the field, as the Corn; the Crab, as the Pearmain; but the one hath a harsh sowre taste, the other mellows as it grows; An hypocrite may grow in outward dimensions, as much as a childe of God; he may pray as much, professe as much; but he growes onely in magnitude, he brings forth sowre grapes, his duties are leavened with pride; the other ripens as he grows; he growes in love, humility, faith, which do mellow and sweeten his duties, and make thē come off with a better relish. The beleever grows as the flower, he casts a fragrancy and perfume.

3. A true Christian grows *Robore*, in *strength*; he growes still more *rooted* and *setled*. The more the tree grows

growes the more it ſpreads its root in the earth*: A Chriſtian who is a Plant of the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, the longer he grows, the more he incorporates into Chriſt, and ſucks ſpiritual juice and ſap from him; he is a dwarf in regard of humility, but a gyant in regard of ſtrength. He is ſtrong to do duties, to bear burdens, to reſiſt tentations.

* ἐῤῥιζωμένοι. Col. 2. 7.

4. He grows *Vigore*, in the *exerciſe of his grace*; He hath not onely oil in his lamps, but his lamps are burning and ſhining. Grace is agil and dexterous. Chriſts vines do flouriſh*, hence we read of a *lively hope**, and a *fervent love**; here is the activity of grace. Indeed ſometimes grace is as a ſleepy habit in the ſoul, like ſap in the vine, not exerting its vigour, which may be occaſion'd through ſpiritual ſloth, or by reaſon of falling into ſome ſinne; but this is only *pro tempore* for a while; the *ſpring* of grace will come, the *flowers will appear*,

* Cant. 6. 11.
* 1 Pet. 1. 3.
* 1 Pet. 1. 22.

Pear, and *the fig-tree put forth her green figs.* The fresh gales of the Spirit do sweetly revive and refocillate grace. The Church of Christ, whose heart was a *garden*, and her graces as precious *spices*, pray for the heavenly breathings of the Spirit, that her sacred spices might flow out*. *Cant. 4. 16.

1. A true Christian grows *Intremento*, both in the kind and in the degree of grace. To his spiritual *living* he gets an augmentation: he addes to *faith*, *vertue*; to *vertue*, *knowledge*; to *knowledge*, *temperance*, &c.* here is grace growing in the *kind*; and he goes on *from faith to faith**; there is grace growing in the *degree*. *We are bound to give thanks to God for you brethren, because your faith groweth exceedingly** , ὑπεραυξάνει, it encreaseth over and above. And the Apostle speaks of those spiritual plants which were laden with Gospel fruit*, *Phil.* 1. 11. A Christian is com- *2 Pet. 1. 5, 6. * Rom. 1. 17. *2 Thes. 1. 1 *Phil. 1. 11

compar'd to the *Vine*, (an emblem of fruitfulneſſe,) he muſt bear full cluſters; we are bid to *perfect* that
*1 Theſ. 3. 10. which is *lacking in our faith**. A Chriſtian muſt never be ſo old as to be paſt bearing; he brings forth
*Pſ. 92. 14. fruit in *his old age**. An heaven-born plant is ever growing; he never thinks he grows enough; he is not content unleſſe he adde every day one cubit to his ſpiritual ſtature. We muſt not be content juſt with ſo much grace as will keep life and ſoul together; a dram or two muſt not ſuffice, but we muſt be ſtil encreaſing
*Col. 2. 9. *with the encreaſe of God**: We had need *renew* our ſtrength as the
*Iſa. 40. 31 *Eagle**; our ſinnes are renewed, our wants are renewed, our tentations are renewed, & ſhall not our *ſtrength* be renewed? Oh be not content with the firſt *embryo* of grace, grace in its infancy and minority. You look for degrees of glory; be you Chriſtians of degrees.

Though

Though a Beleever ſhould be contented with a *modicum* in his eſtate, yet not with a *modicum* in Religion. A Chriſtian of the right breed labours ſtill to excel himſelf, and come nearer unto that holineſſe in God, who is the original, the pattern and prototype of all holineſs.

CHAP. XIII.

Uſe 4.

Shewing how a Chriſtian may know whether he hath learned this divine Art.

Uſe IV. THus having laid down theſe three Cautions, I proceed in the next place to an uſe of Trial. 4. How may a Chriſtian know that he hath learned this leſſon of contentment? I ſhall lay down ſome κριτήρια, or characters by which you ſhall know it. *Uſe* IV. *Trial.*

1. A

1. *Charact.* 1. A contented ſpirit is a *ſilent ſpirit.* He hath not one word to ſay againſt God; I was *dumb* or *ſilent,*
* Pſal. 39. becauſe *thou, Lord, didſt it**, Pſal. 39. Contentment ſilenceth all diſpute;
* Lam. 3. 28. *He ſitteth alone and keepeth ſilence**. There is a *ſinful* ſilence, when God is diſhonoured, his truth wounded, and men hold their peace; this ſilence is a loud ſinne, : and there is an *holy* ſilence, when the ſoul ſits down quiet and content with its condition; When *Samuel* tells *Eli* that heavy meſſage from God, that he would *judge his houſe, and that the iniquity of his family ſhould not be purged a-*
* 1 Sam. 3. 13. *way with ſacrifice for ever**; doth *Eli* murmur, or diſpute? No, he hath not one word to ſay againſt God; *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth*
* Ver. 18. *him good**. A diſcontented ſpirit ſaith, as *Pharaoh, Who is the Lord?* why ſhould I ſuffer all this? why ſhould I be brought into this low condition? *Who is the Lord?* But a gracious heart ſaith

saith as *Eli*, *It is the* Lord, let him do what he will with me. When *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the sons of *Aaron*, had offered up *strange fire*, and *fire went from the* Lord, *and devoured them**, is *Aaron* now in a passion of discontent? No, *Aaron held his peace**. A contented spirit is never angry, unless with himself for having hard thoughts of God. When *Jonah* said, *I do well to be angry*; this was not a contented spirit, it did not become a Prophet.

* Levit. 10. 1.

* Vers. 3.

2. A contented spirit, *is a chearful spirit*; the Greeks call it εὐθυμία. Contentment is something more then *Patience*; for Patience denotes onely submission*, Contentment denotes *chearfulness*. A contented Christian is more then passive; he doth not onely *bear the Crosse*, but *take up the Crosse**. He looks upon God as a wise God, and whatever he doth, though it be not *ad voluntatem*, yet *ad sanitatem**, it is in order to a cure: Hence the contented

2. *Charact.*

* ὑπομονὴν Significat, *ad versitates sustinere*, Cyprian. *item*, *perseverare*, Casaubon.

* Mat. 6. 24.

* *Aug.*

tented Christian is chearful, and with the Apostle, *takes pleasure in infirmities, distresses, &c.** He doth not onely submit to Gods dealings, but rejoyce in them; he doth not onely say, *Iust is the Lord* in all that is befallen me; but *Good is the Lord.* This is to be contented. A sullen Melancholy is hateful; it is said, God loves a *chearful giver**; and God loves a *chearful liver.* We are bid in Scripture not to be *careful*, but we are nowhere bid not to be *chearful.* He that is contented with his condition, doth not abate of his spiritual joy; and indeed he hath that within him which is the ground of chearfulnesse; he carries a pardon sealed in his heart*.

* 2 Cor. 12, 10.

* 2 Cor. 9. 7

* Mat. 9. 2.

3. *Charact.* * Job 1. 21 * Ἐν παντὶ εὐχαριστεῖτε. * 1 Thes. 5.

3. A contented spirit, is a *thankful spirit**. This is a degree above the other; *In every thing giving thanks**. A gracious heart spies mercy in every condition, therefore hath

hath his heart ſcrued up to thankfulneſs; others wil bleſs God for proſperity, he bleſſeth him for affliction. Thus he reaſons with himſelf, Am I in want? God ſees it better for me to want than to abound; God is now dieting of me, he ſees it better for my ſpiritual health, ſometimes to be kept faſting; therefore he doth not only ſubmit, but is thankful. The male-content is ever complaining of his condition; the contented ſpirit is ever giving thanks. Oh what height of grace is this! A contented heart is a *Temple* where the praiſes of God are ſung forth, not a *Sepulchre* wherein they are buried. A contented Chriſtian in the greateſt ſtraits hath his heart enlarged, and dilated in thankfulneſſe. He oft contemplates Gods love in election, he ſes that he is a *monument* of mercy, therefore deſires to be a *pattern* of praiſe. There is always gratulatory muſick in a contented ſoul, the Spirit of grace works in the

heart like new wine, which under the heavieſt preſſures of ſorrow, will have a vent open for thankfulneſſe; this is to be content.

4. He that is content, no condition comes amiſs to him; ſo it is in the *Text*, *in quocunque ſtatu*, *in whatever ſtate I am* *. A contented Chriſtian can, *prout res exigit*, turne himſelf to any thing; either want, or bound. The people of *Iſrael* knew neither how to abound, nor yet how to want *; when they were in want, they murmured; *Can God prepare a Table in the wilderneſs?* & when they ate and were filled, then they lifted up the heele. *Paul* knew how to manage every eſtate; he could be either a note higher, or lower; he was (in this ſenſe) an *Univerſaliſt*, he could

* Καὶ ὀλίγοις κεχρῆσθαι δίδαξε, καὶ λίμνον φέρειν, καὶ ἔνδειαν, καὶ ἀθυμοσύνην. Chryſoſt.

* Οἱ Ἰσραηλῖται ὅτε πεινῶν ἤρξαντο, κατελάλησαν γὰρ τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ εἶπον, Μὴ δυνήσεται ὁ Θεὸς ἑτοιμάσαι τράπεζαν, ἀλλ' ὅταν χορτάζεσθαι· ἔφαγον γὰρ καὶ ἀνεπλήσθησαν, καὶ ἀπελάκτισαν. Theophylact.

could do any thing that God would have him*: If he were in prosperity, he knew how to be thankful; if in adversity, he knew how to be patient; he was neither lift up with the one, nor cast down with the other. He could carry a greater saile, or lesser*; Thus a contented Christian knowes how to turne himself to any condition. *Sicut bonus est dux & peritus, qui in quolibet exercitu operatur secundùm exigentiam ejus; & coriarius, qui ex quolibet corio facit optimos sotulares; ità Christianus sapiens, qui scit quolibet statu bene se gerere.* We have those who can be contented *in some estate*, but not in every estate. They can be content in a wealthy estate, when

* *Similis est vita rotæ, in cujus modò infimâ, modò suprêmâ parte versamur.* Aquinas.

* *Magna & rara virtus est inter opular esurire; inter vestes algere, inter honores humiliari. Scivit.* Hannibal *penuriam pati, nescivit abundare, nam delitiæ Capuanæ* Hannibalem *invictum onervarunt, & Romanis jam imbellem vincendum objecerunt.* Bern.

Aquinas.

they have the streames of milk and honey; while Gods candle shines upon their head, now they are content; but if the winde turne and be against them, now they are discontented. While they have a silver crutch to lean upon, they are contented; but if God breaks this cruth, now they are discontented; but *Paul* had learned in every estate to carry himself with equanimity of minde *; others could be content with their affliction, so God would give them leave to pick and choose. They could be content to bear *such* a cross; they could better endure sicknesse than poverty, or bear losse of estate, than losse of children; if they might have such a mans crosse, they could be content; any condition, but the present: this is not to be content. A contented Christian doth not go to choose his crosse, but leaves

* Ἴσος ἦν ἐν τῇ ἐνδείᾳ, ἐν τῇ πλησμονῇ ὑπὲ ἐκεῖθεν πιεζόμενος, ὑπὲ ἐντεῦθεν χαυνούμενος. Chrysost.

leaves God to choose for him; he is content both for the *kind*, and for the *duration*. A contented spirit saith; Let God apply what medicine he pleaseth, and let it lie on as long as it will; I know when it hath done its cure, and eaten the venome of sin out of my heart, God will take it off again. In a word, a contented Christian, being sweetly captivated under the authority of the Word, desires to be wholly at Gods dispose, and is willing to live in that sphere and climate where God has set him; and if at any time he hath been an instrument of doing noble and brave service in the publick, he knowes he is but a *rational tool*, a servant to authority, and is content to return to his former private condition of life. *Cincinnatus*, after he had done worthily, and purchased to himself great fame in his Dictatorship, did notwithstanding afterwards voluntarily return to till and manure

Pet Martyr his four acres of Ground. Thus ſhould it be with Chriſtians, profeſſing *Godlineſſe with Contentment*, having ſerved *Mars*, not daring to offend *Iupiter*; leſt otherwiſe they diſcover onely to the world a *brutiſh valour*, being ſo untam'd and headſtrong, that when they have conquered others, yet they are not able to rule their own ſpirits.

5. Charact. 5. He that is contented with his condition to rid himſelf out of trouble, will not run himſelf into ſin. I deny not but a Chriſtian may lawfully ſeek to change his condition; ſo farre as Gods providence doth go before, he may follow; but when men will not follow providence, but run before it, as he ſaid, *This evil is of the* Lord, *why ſhould I wait any longer**? if God doth not open the door by his providence, they will break it open, and winde themſelves out of affliction by ſin; bringing their ſouls into trouble by

*2King.6

bring-

bringing their estates out of trouble. This is far from holy Contentation, this is unbelief broken out into rebellion. A contented Christian is willing to wait Gods leasure, and will not stir till God open a door. As *Paul* said in another case, *They have beaten us openly, uncondemned, being* Romans, *and have cast us into prison, and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily, but let them come themselves and fetch us out* *: So with reverence saith the contented Christian, God hath cast me into this condition; and though it be sad and troublesome, yet I will not stir, till God by a clear providence fetch me out. Thus those brave spirited Christians, *Heb.*11.35. *They accepted not deliverance* *, that is, upon base dishonourable termes. They would rather stay in prison, than purchase their liberty by carnal complyance. *Estius* observes on the place, they might not only have

* Acts 16 37.

* Heb. 11.

had their enlargement, but been rais'd to honour, and put into offices of trust; yet the honour of Religion was dearer to them, than either liberty or honour. A contented Christian will not remove, till as the *Israelites*, he see a *pillar of cloud and fire* going before him: *It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord**. 'Tis good to stay Gods leasure, and not to extricate our selves out of trouble, till we see the star of Gods providence pointing out a way to us.

* Lam. 3. 26

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

USE 5.

Containing a Chriſtian Directory, or Rules about Contentment.

Uſe V. I Proceed now to an uſe of direction, to ſhew Chriſtians how they may attaine to this *Divine Art* of Contentation. Certainly it is feaſible, others of Gods Saints have reached to it. St. *Paul* here had it; and what do we think of thoſe we read of in that little book of Martyrs, *Heb.* 11. who had trials of *cruel mockings and ſcourgings*, who wandred about in *Deſerts* and *Caves* *Uſe* 5. *Direction.*

Causes, yet were contented; so that it is possible to be had. And here I shall lay down some Rules for holy Contentment.

SECT. I.

1. Rule. *Advance Faith.*

All our disquiets do issue immediately from unbelief. 'Tis this that raiseth the storme of discontent in the heart. Oh set faith a work; 'tis the property of faith to silence our doubtings, to scatter our fears, to still the heart when the passions are up. 'Faith works the heart to a sweet, serene composure; 'tis not having *food* and *raiment*, but having *Faith* which will make us content. Faith chides down passion; When Reason begins to sink, let Faith swim.

Quest. *Quest.* How doth faith work Contentment. *Answ.*

Anſw. 1. Faith ſhews the ſoul, that whatever its trials are, yet it is from the hand of a Father; 'tis indeed a bitter cup, but, *Shall I not drink the cup which my Father hath given me to drink?* 'tis in love to my ſoul; God *corrects* with the ſame love he *crownes* me; God is now training me up for heaven, he carves me, to make me a *poliſhed ſhaft*. Theſe ſufferings bring forth patience, humility, even *the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs* *. And if God can bring ſuch ſweet fruit out of a ſower ſtock, let him graft me where he pleaſe. Thus faith brings the heart to holy contentment. *Anſw.* 1

* Heb. 12. 11.

2. Faith ſucks the honey of Contentment out of the hive of the Promiſe. Chriſt is the *Vine*, the Promiſes are the cluſters of Grapes that grow upon this Vine; and Faith preſſeth the ſweet wine of Contentment out of theſe ſpiritual cluſters of the Promiſes. I will ſhew you

but

but one cluſter; *The Lord will give grace and glory* *: here is enough for faith to live upon. The Promiſe is the flower out of which Faith diſtils the ſpirits, and quinteſſence of divine Contentment. In a word, Faith carries up the ſoul, and makes it aſpire after more noble and generous delights than earth affords, and to live *in* the world *above* the world*. Would you lead contented lives? live up to the height of your Faith.

* Pſ. 84. 11.

* *Diſcite in hoc mundo ſupra mundum eſſe.* Ambroſe

SECT. II.

2. Rule. *Labour for Aſſurance.*

Oh let us get the intereſt cleard between God and our own ſouls. *Intereſt* is a word much in uſe, a pleaſing word, Intereſt in great friends, intereſt-money; Oh if there be an *intereſt* worth looking after, 'tis an intereſt

tereſt between God and the ſoul; Labour to ſay, *My God.* To be without money, and without friends, and without God too*, is ſad; but he whoſe faith doth flouriſh into aſſurance, that can ſay, *I know in whom I have believed**, (as Saint *Paul*,) that man hath enough to give his heart contentment. When a mans debts are paid, and he can go abroad without fear of arreſting, what contentment is this! Oh, let your title be cleared; if God be ours, whatever we want in the creature, is infinitely made up in him. Do I want bread? I have Chriſt the bread of life. Am I under defilement? his blood is like the trees of the Sanctuary; not only for meat, but medicine*. If any thing in the world be worth labouring for, it is to get ſound evidences that God is ours. If this be once clear'd, what can come amiſſe? No matter what ſtormes I meet with, ſo that I know where

*Eph. 2. 12.

* 2 Tim. 1 12.

*Ezek. 47. 12.

to

to put in for harbour. He that hath God to be his God is ſo well contented with his condition, that he doth not much care whether he hath any thing elſe. To reſt in a condition where a Chriſtian cannot ſay God is his God, is matter of *feare*; and if he can ſay ſo truly, and yet is not contented, is matter of *ſhame*. David *encouraged himſelfe in the Lord his God** ; it was ſad with him, *Ziklag* burnt, his wives taken captive, he loſt all, and like to have loſt his Souldiers hearts too, (for they *ſpake of ſtoning him*;) yet he had the ground of Contentment within him, *viz. an intereſt in God*, and this was a pillar of ſupportment to his ſpirit. He that knows *God is his*, and all that is in God is *for his good*; if this doth not ſatisfie, I know nothing will.

*1 Sam. 30

SECT.

SECT. III.

3. Rule. *Get an humble ſpirit.*

The humble man is the contented man; if his *eſtate* be low, his heart is lower than his eſtate; therefore be content. If his *eſteem* in the world be low, he that is little in his own eyes, will not be much troubled to be little in the eyes of others. He hath a meaner opinion of himſelf than others can have of him. The humble man ſtudies his own unworthineſſe; he looks upon himſelf as *leſs then the leaſt* of Gods mercies*, and then a *little* will content him: He cries out with *Paul*, that he is *the chief of ſinners*,*; therefore doth not murmur, but admire: He doth not ſay his comforts are ſmall, but his ſins are great. He thinks it a mercy he is out of hell, therefore is contented,

*Gen. 32. 10.

*1 Tim. 1. 15.

tented. He doth not go to carve out a more happy condition to himself; he knows the worſt piece God cuts him, is better than he deſerves. A proud man is never contented, he is one that hath an high opinion of himſelf; therefore under ſmall bleſſings is diſdainful, under ſmall croſſes impatient. The humble ſpirit is the contented ſpirit, if his croſs be light, he reckons it in the inventory of his mercies; if it be heavy, yet takes it upon his knees, knowing that when his eſtate is worſer, it is to make him better. Where you lay humility for the foundation, Contentment will be the ſuperſtructure.

SECT.

CHAP. IV.

4. Rule. *Keep a clear conſcience.* 1 Tim. 3. 9

Contentment is the *Manna* that is laid up in the *Ark* of a good conſcience; Oh take heed of indulging any ſin. 'Tis as natural for guilt to breed diſquiet, as for putrid matter to breed vermine. Sin lies as *Jonah* in the ſhip, it raiſeth a tempeſt. If duſt or motes be gotten into the eye, they make the eye water, and cauſe a ſoreneſſe in it; if the eye be cleare, then it is free from that ſoreneſſe: If ſin be gotten into the conſcience, which is as the eye of the ſoul, then grief and diſquiet breeds there; but keep the eye of conſcience clear, and all is well. What *Solomon* ſaith of a good ſtomack, I may ſay of *a good conſcience:* * *To the hungry ſoul every bitter thing is ſweet*; ſo to a * Pro. 27. 7

good conſcience every bitter thing is ſweet; it can pick contentment out of the *Croſs*. Good conſcience turnes the waters of *Marah* into wine. Would you have a quiet heart? get a ſmiling conſcience. I wonder not to hear *Paul* ſay, he was in every ſtate content; When he could make that triumph, *I have liv-*
*Act. 13. 1 *ed in all good conſcience to this day**. When once a mans reckonings are clear, it muſt needs let in abundance of contentment into the heart. Good conſcience can ſuck contentment out of the bittereſt drugge; under ſlanders, *This is our rejoycing, the*
*2 Cor. 1. 12. *Teſtimony of our conſcience**: in caſe of imprisonment, *Paul* had his priſonſongs, and could play the ſweet leſſon of contentment when his feet
*Act. 16. 25 *were in the ſtocks**; one calls it *bona Auguſtine conſcientia Paradiſus*, the Paradiſe of a good conſcience; & if it be ſo, then in priſon we may be in Paradiſe. When the times are troubleſome,

good

good conſcience makes a calme; If conſcience be clear, what though the dayes be cloudy? Is it not a contentment to have a friend alwayes by, to ſpeak a good word for us? ſuch a friend is conſcience. Good conſcience as *Davids Harp*, drives away the evil ſpirit of diſcontent. When thoughts begin to ariſe, and the heart is diſquieted; Conſcience ſaith to a man as the *King* did to *Nehemiah*, *Why is thy countenance ſad** ? So ſaith conſcience, haſt not thou the *ſeed of God* in thee? art not thou an *heir of the Promiſe*? Haſt not thou a treaſure that thou canſt never be plundered of? Why is thy countenance ſad? Oh keep conſcience clear, and you ſhall never want contentment. For a man to keep the *pipes* of his body, the veins and arteries free from colds and obſtructions, is the beſt way to maintaine health: So, to keep conſcience clear, and to preſerve it from the ob-

*Neh. 2. 2.

obstructions of guilt, is the best way to maintaine contentment. First, conscience is pure, and then peaceable.

SECT. V.

5. Rule. *Learn to deny your selves.*

Look well to your affections, bridle them in. Do two things;

1. Mortifie your desires.
2. Moderate your delights.

1. *Mortifie your desires.* We must not be of the Dragons temper, who (they say) is so thirsty, that no water will quench his thirst; *Mortifie therefore your inordinate affection** ; in the Greek it is ἐπιθυμίαν κακὴν, your *evil affection*; to shew that our desires when they are inordinate, are *evil.* Crucifie your desires,

* Col. 3. 5.

fires, νεκρώσατε, be as dead men; a dead man hath no appetite.

Quest. How should a Christian martyr his desires? *Quest.*

Answ. 1. Get a right judgement of the things here below: They are mean, beggarly things; *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not* *? The appetite must be guided by reason; the affections are the feet of the soul, therefore they must *follow* the judgement, not *lead* it. *Answ.* *Pro. 23. 5

2. Often seriously meditate of mortality; Death will soone crop those flowers which we delight in, and pull down the fabrick of those bodies which we so garnish and beautifie. Think when you are locking up your money in your chest, who shall shortly lock you up in your coffin?

3. *Moderate your delights.* Set not your hearts too much upon any creature*. What we over-love, we shall over-grieve. *Rachel* *62. 10.

ſet her heart too much upon her children, and when ſhe had loſt them, ſhe loſt her ſelfe too; ſuch a veine of griefe was opened as could not be ſtenched, *ſhe refuſed to be comforted.* Here was diſcontent. When we let any creature lye too neer our heart, when God pulls away that comfort, a piece of our heart is rent away with it. Too much fondneſſe ends in frowardneſs. Thoſe that would be content in the want of mercy, muſt be moderate in the enjoyment. *Jonathan* dipt the rod in honey, he did not thruſt it in. Let us take heed of ingulphing our ſelves in pleaſure; better have a ſpare diet, then by having too much, to ſurfeit.

SECT.

SECT. VI.

6. Rule. *Get much of heaven into your heart.*

Spiritual things ſatisfie; the more of heaven is in us, the leſſe earth will content. He that hath once taſted the love of God*, his thirſt is much quenched toward ſublunary things; the joyes of Gods Spirit are heart-filling and heart-chearing joyes; he that hath theſe hath heaven begun in him, *Rom.* 14. 17. and ſhall we not be content to be in heaven? Oh get a ſublime heart, *Seek the things that are above**; flie aloft in your affections, thirſt after the graces and comforts of the Spirit; the Eagle that flies above in the aire, fears not the ſtinging of the ſerpēt; the ſerpent creeps on his belly, and ſtings onely ſuch creatures as go upon the earth.

* Pſ. 63. 5.

* Col. 3. 1.

Diſcontent is a ſerpent that ſtings only an earthly heart; an heavenly ſoul that with the Eagle flies aloft, finds abundantly enough in God to give contentment, and is not ſtung with the cares and diſquiets of the world.

SECT. VII.

7. Rule. *Look not ſo much on the dark ſide of your condition, as on the light.*

God doth chequer his providences, white and black, as the pillar of cloud had its light ſide & dark; look on the light ſide of thy eſtate; who looks on the backſide of a landskip? Suppoſe thou art caſt in a Law-ſuit, there is the *dark ſide*; yet thou haſt ſome land left, there is the *light ſide*. Thou haſt ſickneſs in thy body, there is the *dark ſide*; but grace in thy ſoul

ſoul, there is the *light ſide*. Thou haſt a childe taken away, there is the *dark ſide*; thy husband lives, there is the *light ſide*. Gods providences in this life are various, repreſented by thoſe ſpeckled horſes among the Myrtle-trees, which were * the *red* and *white*; mercies and afflictions are inter-woven; God doth ſpeckle his work. Oh, ſaith one, I want ſuch a comfort: but weigh all thy mercies in the balance, and that will make thee content. If a man did want a finger, would he be ſo diſcontented for the loſſe of that, as not to be thankful for all the other parts and joynts of his body? Look on the *light ſide* of your condition, and then all your diſcontents will eaſily disband; do not pore upon your loſſes, but ponder upon your mercies. What? wouldſt thou have no croſſe at all? Why ſhould one man think to have all good things, when himſelf is good but in part? wouldſt thou

* Zach. 1. 8.

thou have no evil about thee, who haſt ſo much evil in thee? thou art not fully ſanctified in this life, how then thinkeſt thou to be fully ſatisfied? never look for perfection of contentment till there be perfection of grace.

SECT. VIII.

8. Rule. *Conſider in what a poſture we ſtand here in the world.*

1. We are in a *military* condition, we are *ſouldiers* *; now a ſouldier is content with any thing: what though he hath not his ſtately houſe, his rich furniture, his ſoft bed, his full table? yet doth not complaine; he can lye in ſtraw as well as down; he mindes not his lodging, but his thoughts run upon dividing the ſpoile, and the garland of honour that ſhall be ſet upon

* 2 Tim. 2. 3.

upon his head; and for hope of this, is content to run any hazard, endure any hardſhip. Were it not abſurd to hear him complaine that he wants ſuch proviſion, and is faine to lye out in the fields? a Chriſtian is a *military perſon*, he fights the Lords battles, he is Chriſts Enſigne-bearer. Now what though he endures hard fare, and the bullets fly about? he fights for a crown, and therefore muſt be content.

2. We are in a *peregrine condition*; Pilgrims and travellers. A man that is in a ſtrange countrey is contented with any diet or uſage, he is glad of any thing, though he hath not that reſpect or attendance as he looks for at home; nor is capable of the priviledges and immunities of that place, he is content; he knows when he comes into his own country he hath lands to inherit, and there he ſhall have honour and reſpect: So it is with a childe of God, he is in a pilgrim-

pilgrim-condition, *I am a ſtranger with thee, and a ſojourner, as all my fathers were* *. Therefore let a Chriſtian be content: he is *in* the world, but not *of* the world; he is borne of God, and is a Citizen of the new *Jeruſalem* *; therefore, though *he hunger and thirſt, and have no certaine dwelling place* *, yet he muſt be content; it will be better when he comes into his own countrey.

* Pſ. 39. 12.

* Heb. 12. 10.

* 1 Cor. 4. 11

3. We are in a *mendicant condition*; we are beggars, we beg at heaven gate, *Give us this day our dayly bread*; we live upon Gods almes, therefore muſt be content with any thing; a beggar muſt not pick and chooſe, he is contented with the refuſe. Oh, why doſt thou murmur that art a beggar, and art fed out of the alms-basket of Gods providence?

SECT.

SECT. IX.

9. Rule. *Let not your hopes depend* extrinsicè *upon these outward things.*

Leane not upon sandy pillars; we oft build our comfort upon such a friend or estate, and when that prop is removed, all our joy is gone, and our hearts begin either to *faile* or *fret*. A lame man leanes on his crutches, and if they *break* he is undone: let not thy contentment go upon crutches which may soon fail; the ground of contentment must be within thy self. The word αὐτάρκεια, which is used for contentment, signifies selfe-sufficiency; a Christian hath that from within that is able to support him; that strength of faith and *good hope through grace*, as bears up his heart in the deficiency of outward

ward comforts. The Philoſophers of old, when their eſtates were gone, yet could take contentment in the goods of the minde, their learning and vertue; and ſhall not a beleever much more in the grace of the Spirit that rich enamel and embroidery of the ſoule? Say with thy ſelfe, If friends leave me, if riches take wings, yet I have that within comforts me, *viz.* an heavenly treaſure, *Omnia mea mecum porto*; when the bloſſomes of my eſtate are blown off, ſtill there is the ſap of contentment in the root of my heart, I have ſtill an intereſt in God, and that intereſt cannot be broken off. Oh never place your felicity in theſe dul and beggerly things here below.

SECT.

SECT. X.

10. Rule. *Let us often compare our condition.*

Queſt. *How ſhould I compare?*

Anſw. Make this five-fold compariſon, 1. *Compariſon.*

1. Let us compare our condition and our deſert together; if we have not what we deſire, we have more than we deſerve. For our *mercies*, we have deſerved *leſſe*; for our afflictions, we have deſerved *more*.

Firſt, in regard of our *mercies*, we have deſerved leſſe. What can we deſerve? *Can man be profitable to the Almighty?* we live upon free grace. *Alexander* gave a great gift to one of his ſubjects; the man being much taken with it, This (ſaith he) is more than I am worthy of; I do not give thee this, ſaith the King, becauſe thou art

art worthy of it, but I give a gift *like Alexander.* Whatever we have is not *merit*, but *bounty*; the leaſt bit of bread is more than God owes us; we can bring faggots to our own burning, but not one flower to the garland of our ſalvation; he that hath the leaſt mercy, will die in Gods debt.

2. Secondly, in regard of our *afflictions*, we have deſerved more. * Ezra. 9. 13 *Thou haſt puniſhed us leſs than our iniquities deſerve**; Is our condition ſad? we have deſerved it ſhould be worſe; hath God taken away our eſtate from us? he might have taken away Chriſt from us: hath he thrown us into priſon? he might have thrown us into hell; he might as well damne us, as whip us; this ſhould make us contented.

2. *Compariſon.*

**Dum tibi alienas pericula memoras, mitiùs portis tuis.* Iſid. Soliloq. l. 2.

2. Let us compare our condition with others; and this will make us content; we look at them who are above us; let us look at them who are below us*; we ſee one in his ſilks

ſilks, another in his ſackcloth; one hath the waters of a full cup wrung out to him, another is mingling his drink with teares; how many pale faces do we behold, whom not ſickneſſe, but want hath brought into a conſumption! think of this, and be content. 'Tis worſe with them, who perhaps deſerve better than we, and are higher in Gods favour. Am I in priſon? was not *Daniel* in a worſe place, *viz.* the Lions den? Do I live in a mean cottage? look on them who are baniſhed from their houſes. We read of the primitive Saints, *that they wandered up & down in ſheeps skins and Goats skins, of whom the world was not worthy**. Haſt thou a gentle fit of an ague? look on them who are tormented with the ſtone and gout, &c. others of Gods children have had greater afflictions, and have born them better than we. *Daniel* fed upon pulſe, and drank water, yet was fairer than they who

* Heb. 11. 37.

Dan. 1. 15. are of the Kings portion; some Christians who have been in a lower condition, that have fed upon pulse and water, have looked better; *viz.* been more patient and contented than we who enjoy abundance. Do others rejoyce in affliction, and do we repine? Can they take up their Crosse and walk chearfully under it, and do we under a lighter cross murmur?

3. Let us compare our condition with Christs upon Earth; what a poor, mean condition was he pleased to be in for us? he was contented with any thing. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he be-*

*2 Cor. 8. 9. *came poor**. He could have brought down an house from heaven with him, or challenged the high places of the earth; but he was contented to be in the *wine presse*, that we might be in the *wine-cellar*; & to live poor, that we might die rich; the manger

was

was his cradle, the cobwebs his canopy; he, who is now preparing mansions for us in Heaven, had none for himself on earth, *he had no where to lay his head.* Christ came in *Formâ pauperis*; who *being in the forme of God took upon him the forme of a servant**. We read not of any summes of money he had; when he wanted money, he was fain to work a miracle for it*. Jesus Christ was in a low condition, he was never high, but when he was lifted up upon the Crosse, and that was his humility, he was content to live poor, and die cursed. Oh compare your condition with Christs.

* Phil. 2. 7.

* Mat. 17. 27.

4. Let us compare our condition with what it was once, and this will make us content. 4. *Comparison.*

First, let us compare our *spiritual estate* with what it was once. What were we when we lay in our blood? we were heirs apparent to hel, having no right to pluck one leaf from the 1.

tree of the promiſe; it was a *Chriſtleſs* and *hopeleſs* condition, *Epheſ.* 2.12. but now God hath cut off the entaile of hell and damnation; he hath taken you out of the wild Olive of nature, and engraffed you into Chriſt, making you living branches of that living Vine; he hath not only cauſed the light to ſhine *upon* you, but *into* you*, and hath intereſſed you in all the priviledges of ſonſhip; is not here that may make the ſoul content?

*Eph. 2. 12.

2 Cor. 4. 6.

2. Secondly, let us compare our *temporal eſtate* with what it was once: alas, we had nothing when we ſtepp'd out of the womb; *For we brought nothing with us into the world**; if we have not that which we deſire, we have more than we did bring with us; we brought nothing with us (*but ſinne*;) other creatures bring ſomething with them into the world; the Lamb brings wool, the ſilkworm ſilk, &c. but we brought nothing with us. What if our condition

*1 Tim. 6. 7

dition at preſent be low? it is better than it was once, therefore having food and raiment, let us be content; whatever we have, Gods providence fetcht it in to us; and if we loſe all, yet we have as much as we brought with us. This was that that made *Job* content, *Naked came I out of my mothers womb**; as if he had ſaid, though God hath taken away all from me, yet why ſhould I murmur? I am as rich now as I was when I came into the world; I have as much left as I brought with me; naked came I hither; Therefore bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.

* Job 1.21.

5. Let us compare our condition with what it ſhall be ſhortly. There is a time ſhortly coming, when if we had all the riches of *India*, they would do us no good; we muſt die, and can carry nothing with us, ſo ſaith the Apoſtle, *It is certaine, we can carry nothing out of the world**; therefore it follows, *having food and raiment, let*

5. *Compariſon.*

* 1 Tim. 6 7.

Vetera frangantur sepulchra, ossa divitum agnoscas, non opes. Bede.

us be therewith content, Verse 8. Open the rich mans grave, and see what is there; you may find the *Misers* bones, but not his riches: were we to live for ever here, or could we carry our riches into another world, then indeed we might be discontented when we look upon our empty bags; but it is not so: God may presently seal a warrant for death to apprehend us; and when we die we cannot carry our estate with us. Honour and riches descend not into the grave, why then are we troubled at our outward condition? why do we disguise our selves with discontent? Oh lay up a stock of grace, be rich in faith and good
Rev. 14. 13. works, these *riches will follow us**; no other coin but grace will passe currant in Heaven, silver and gold will not go there; labour to *be rich to-*
* Luke 12. 21. *wards God**? and as for other things, be not solicitous, *we shall carry nothing with us.*

SECT.

SECT. XI.

11. Rule. *Go not to bring your condition to your mind, but bring your mind to your condition.*

The way for a Christian to be contented, is not by raising his estate higher, but by bringing his spirit lower; not by making his barnes wider, but his heart narrower*; one man a whole Lordship or Mannor will not content; another is satisfied with a few acres of land; what is the difference? the one studies to satisfie curiosity, the other necessity; the one thinks what he may *have*, the other what he may *spare*.

* *Non qui parùm habet sed qui plus cupit, pauper est.* Laert. Diogenes.

* *Si vis esse Dives (inquit Pythocles) non est pecuniæ adjiciendũ, sed cupiditatibus detrahendũ.*

* Πλούσιος γὰρ οὐκ ὁ πολλῶν χρημάτων δεόμενος, καὶ πολλὰ πρίβεβλημένος, ἀλλ' ὁ μηδενὸς χρείαν ἔχων. Chrysost.

SECT. XII.

12. Rule. *Study the vanity of the creature.*

It matters not whether we have more or leſſe of theſe things, they have vanity written upon the frontiſpiece of them; the world is like a *ſhadow that declineth*; it is delightful, but deceitful; it promiſeth more than we finde, and it failes us when we have moſt need of it*. All the world rings changes, and is conſtant only in its diſappointments: what then if we have leſſe of that which is at beſt but voluble and fluid? The world is as full of *mutation* as *motion*; and what if God cuts us ſhort in ſublunaries? The more a man hath to do with the world, the more he hath to do with vanity. The world may be compared to yce, which is ſmooth, but

* *O quantum eſt in rebus inane.*

but ſlippery; or to the Egyptian Temples, without very beautiful, & ſumptuous, but within nothing to be ſeen but the image of an Ape; every creature ſaith concerning ſatisfaction, *It is not in me.* The world is not a filling, but a flying comfort. 'Tis like a game at Tennis; Providence bandies her golden balls, firſt to one, then to another. Why are we diſcontented at the loſſe of theſe things, but becauſe we expect that from them which is not, and repoſe that in them, which we ought not? *Jonah was exceeding glad of the Gourd**? what a vanity was it? is it much to ſee a withering Gourd ſmitten? or to ſee the Moone dreſſing it ſelf in a new ſhape and figure?

* Jonah 4. 6

Quid eſt omnis hujus mundi voluptas? annon virens hedera quæ textili ſylvâ per parietem inſcripit, lætamque ſupra caput umbram exſicat? paravit Deus vermem & percuſſit hederam & exaruit; ita prorſus hederæ noſtræ ſubitò marceſcunt, ſimulque cum illis omne illud umbratile gaudium, Drexel. de æter. p. 163.

SECT.

SECT. XIII.

13. Rule. *Get phancy regulated.*

It is the phancy which raiſeth the price of things above their real worth; what is the reaſon one Tulip is worth five pounds, another perhaps not worth one ſhilling? phancy raiſeth the price; the difference is rather imaginary then real: ſo why it ſhould be better to have thouſands then hundreds, is, becauſe men phancy it ſo; if we could phancy a lower condition better; *as having leſſe care in it, & leſſe account, it would be far more eligible; the water that ſprings out of the rock, drinks as ſweet, as if it came out of a golden chalice*; things are as we phancy them,

**Status humilis efficax virtutis gymnaſium.* Archeſilaus. *Dulcis proſiliens aqua ſive è Petra fluens, ſive in poculo, ſive ex mandibulo aſini, ad reſtringuendam ſitim ſufficit. Panis ſubcinericius, mel agreſte poſſunt te ſortem reddere aequè ac cibus ſplendidiſſimus.* Hyperius.

them. Ever ſince the fall, the fancy is diſtempered; *God ſaw that the imagination of the thoughts of his heart were evil**. Phancy looks through wrong ſpectacles; pray that God will ſanctifie your fancy; a lower condition would content, if the mind and phancy were ſet right. *Diogenes* preferred his Cynical life before *Alexanders* royalty; he phancied his little cloyſter beſt. *Fabricius* a poor man, yet deſpiſed the gold of King *Pyrrhus*. Gen. 6. 5.

——*Contentus honeſto*
Fabricius parvo ſpernebat munera regum,
Sudabatque gravi Conſul Serranus aratro. Claud. l. 1.

Could we cure a diſtempered phancy, we might ſoon conquer a diſcontented heart.

SECT.

SECT. XIV.

14. Rule. *Conſider how little will ſuffice nature.*

The body is but of ſmall continent, and is eaſily recruited. Chriſt hath taught us to pray *for our daily bread*; *Parva ſeges ſatis eſt*, nature is content with a little; μὴ πεινᾷν, μὴ διψᾷν, not to thirſt, not to ſtarve is enough, ſaith *Gregory Nazianzen*; meat and drink is a Chriſtians riches, ſaith St. *Hierome**; and the Apoſtle ſaith, *Having food and raiment, let us be content.*

* *Cibus & potus ſunt divitiæ Chriſtianorum.*

—*O prodigia rerum,*
Luxuries, nunquam parvo contenta paratu,
Et quæſitorum pelago, terraq; ciborum
Ambitioſa Fames, & lauta gloria menſæ!
Diſcite quàm parvo liceat producere vitam,

Et

Et quantum natura petat ——

Lucan. l. 4. *Pharſal.*

The ſtomack is ſooner fill'd than the eye; How quickly would a man be content, if he would ſtudy rather to ſatisfie his *hunger* than his *humour?*

SECT. XV.

15. Rule. *Beleeve the preſent condition is beſt for us.*

Fleſh and blood is not a competent judge. Surfeited ſtomacks are for banquetting ſtuff; but a man that regards his health, is rather for ſolid food. Vaine men fancy ſuch a condition beſt, and would flouriſh in their bravery; whereas a wiſe Chriſtian hath his will melted into Gods will, and thinks it beſt to be at his finding; God is wiſe, he knowes whether we need food, or phyſick; and if we could acquieſce

in

in providence the quarrel would ſoon be at an end. Oh, what a ſtrange creature would man be, if he were what he could wiſh himſelf? Be content to be at Gods allowance, God knows which is the fitteſt paſture to put his ſheep in; Sometimes a more barren ground doth well, whereas rank paſture may rot. Do I meet with ſuch a croſſe? God ſhewes me what the world is; he hath no better way to wean me, than by putting me to a ſtep-mother. Doth God ſtint me in my allowance? he is now dieting me. Do I meet with loſſes? it is, that God may keep *me* from being loſt. Every croſſe-wind ſhall at laſt blow me to the right port. Did we believe that condition beſt which God doth parcel out to us, we ſhould chearfully ſubmit and ſay; *The lines are fallen in pleaſant places.*

SECT.

SECT. XVI.

16 Rule. *Doe not too much indulge the fleſh.*

We have taken an oath in Baptiſme to *forſake the fleſh.* The fleſh is a worſe enemy than the devil; it is *a boſome traitour:* an enemy within is worſt. If there were no devil to tempt, the fleſh would be another *Eve* to tempt to the *forbidden fruit.* Oh take heed of giving way to it; whence is al our diſcontent, but from the fleſhly part? The fleſh puts us upon the immoderate purſuit of the world; it conſults for eaſe and plenty; and if it be not ſatisfied, then diſcontents begin to ariſe. Oh, let it not have the reines, martyr the fleſh; in ſpiritual things the fleſh is a *ſluggard*, in ſecular things an *Horſleech*, crying, Give, give. The fleſh is an enemy

enemy to ſuffering *, it will ſooner make a man a *Courtier* than a *Martyr*. Oh keep it under, put its neck under Chriſts yoke, ſtretch and naile it to his Croſſe; never let a Chriſtian look for *contentment* in his ſpirit, till there be *confinement* in his fleſh.

* *Non durum eſt quod patimur, ſed molles ſumus.* Senec.

SECT. XVII.

17. Rule. *Meditate much on the glory which ſhall be revealed.*

There are great things laid up in heaven: Though it be ſad for the preſent, yet let us be content in that it will ſhortly be better; it is but a while, and we ſhall be with Chriſt, bathing our ſouls in the fountaine of his love; we ſhall never complain of wants or injuries any more; our croſſe may be heavy, but one ſight of Chriſt will make us forget all our former ſorrowes. There are two things ſhould give contentment;

1. That God will make us able to bear

bear our troubles*. God, (saith *Chryſoſtome*) doth like a Luteniſt, who will not let the ſtringes of his Lute be too ſlack, leſt it ſpoil the muſick; nor will he ſuffer them to be too hard ſtretched, or ſcrued up, leſt they break: So doth God deal with us; he will not let us have too much proſperity, leſt this ſpoil the muſick of prayer and repentance; nor yet too much adverſity, leſt the ſpirit *fail before me*, and the ſouls *which he hath made**.

* 1 Cor. 10. 13. *Chryſoſt.*

*Iſa. 57. 16

2. When we have ſuffered *a while**, we ſhall be perfected in glory; the Croſſe ſhall be our ladder by which we ſhall climb up to heaven. Be then content, and the ſcene will alter. God will ere long turn our water into wine; the hope of this is enough to drive away all diſtempers from *the heart*. Bleſſed be God, it will be better: *We have no continuing city here**, therefore our afflictions cannot continue. A wiſe man looks ſtill to

* 1 Pet. 5. 10.

* Heb. 13.

the end: *The end of the just man is*
*Psal. 37. 37. *peace**. Me thinks the smoothnesse of the end should make amends for the ruggednesse of the way. O eternity, eternity! think often of the *Kingdome prepared*. *David* was advanc'd from the field to the Throne. First he held his *shepherds staffe*, and shortly after, the *Royal Scepter*. Gods people may be put to hard services here; but God hath chosen them to be *Kings* to fit upon the throne with the Lord Jesus. This being weighed in the balance of faith, would be an excellent means to bring the heart to contentment.

SECT. XVIII.

18. Rule. *Be much in prayer.*

The last Rule for Contentment is, *Be much in prayer*. Beg of God, that he wil work our hearts to this blessed frame; *Is any man afflicted? let him*
*Jam. 5. 13 *pray**: So, is any man discontented? let

let him pray, Prayer gives vent. The opening of a veine, lets out the bad blood: When the heart is filled with ſorrow and diſquiet, prayer lets out the bad blood. The key of prayer oyled with teares*, unlocks the heart of all its diſcontents. Prayer is an holy ſpell or charme to drive away trouble; Prayer is the unboſoming of the ſoul, the unloading of all our cares in Gods breſt, and this uſhers in ſweet contentment. When there is any burden upon our ſpirits, by opening our mind to a friend, we find our hearts finely eaſed and quieted, It is not our *ſtrong reſolutions*, but our *ſtrong requeſts* to God which muſt give the heart eaſe in trouble; by Prayer the ſtrength of Chriſt is brought into the ſoul; and where that is, a man is able to go through any condition. *Paul* could be in every ſtate content: but that you may not think he was able to do this of himſelf; he tels you, that though

* *Expletur lachrymis, egeritúrq; dolor.*

he would want and abound, and *πάντα ποιῆν, do all things*; yet it was *through Christ strengthening him*, Phil 4.13. 'Tis the childe that writes, but it is the Scrivener guides his hand. St. *Paul* arrived at the hardest duty in Religion, *viz.* *Contentment*; but the Spirit was his *Pilot*, and Christ his *strength*, and this strength was ushered in by holy prayer. Prayer is a powerful Oratour. Prayer is an *exorist* with God, and an *exorcist* against sin. The best way is to pray down discontent. What *Luther* saith of *concupiscence*, I may say of *Discontent*; prayer is a sacred Leech * to suck out the venome, and swelling of this passion. Prayer composeth the heart, and brings it into tune. Hath God deprived you of many comforts? blesse God that he left you the Spirit of Prayer. *Use 6.*

Ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ μεγαληγορία τὸ πρᾶγμα ἦν ὃ ἔφα πως ἐπιλαμβάνεται, ταχέως πάντα ἰσχύω ἐν τῷ ἐνδυναμοῦντι μὲ Χριστῷ. οὐκ ἐμὸν τὸ κατόρθωμα, ἀλλὰ τῆς τὴν ἰσχὺν δεδωκότος ἐκείνου. Chrysost.

* *Oratio est hirudo animæ.*

Use 6. The laſt uſe is of comfort, or an encouraging word to the contented Chriſtian. If there be an heaven upon earth, thou haſt it. O Chriſtian, thou mayeſt inſult over thy troubles, and with the *Leviathan* laugh at the ſhaking of a ſpear, *Job* 41, 29. What ſhall I ſay? thou art a crown to thy profeſſion; thou doſt hold it out to all the world, that there's vertue enough in Religion to give the ſoul contentment. Thou ſheweſt height of grace. When grace is *crowning*, it is not ſo much for us to be content; but when grace is *conflicting*, and meets with croſſes, tentations, agonies; now to be content, this is a glorious thing indeed. *Use* VI. *Conſolation* Job 41. 29

To a contented Chriſtian, I ſhall ſay two things for a farewel.

Firſt, God is exceeding by taken with ſuch a frame of heart. God ſaith of a contented Chriſtian, as *David* once ſaid of *Goliahs* ſword, *There is*

none like that, give it me, 1 Sam. 21. 9. If you would please God, and be *men of his heart*, be contented. It is said that *Rebecca* made *Isaac* savoury meat, such as her husband loved; would ye give God *such a dish as he loves?* bring him this of contentment. The Musician hath many lessons to play, but he hath one above all the rest: There are many lessons of holy Musick that delight God, the lesson of repentance, humility, &c. But this lesson of Contentment is the sweetest lesson that a Beleever can play. God hates a froward spirit.

Secondly, the contented Christian shall be no loser. What lost *Job* by his patience? God gave him three times as much as he had before. What lost *Abram* by his contentment? he was content to leave his Country at Gods call; the Lord makes a Covenant with him, that he would be *his God*, Gen. 17. He changeth

changeth his name, no more *Abram*, but *Abraham*, the Father of many Nations. God makes his ſeed as the ſtars of Heaven; nay, honours him with this title, *The Father of the faithful.* The Lord makes known his ſecrets to him, *Shall I hide* from Abraham *the thing that I will do?* God ſettles a rich inheritance upon him, that land which was a type of Heaven, and afterwards tranſlated him into the bleſſed Paradiſe. God will be ſure to reward the contented Chriſtian. As our Saviour ſaid in another caſe to *Nathanael*, *Becauſe I ſaid I ſaw thee under the fig-tree, beleevеſt thou? thou ſhalt ſee greater things then theſe.* So I ſay, Art thou contented (O Chriſtian) with a little? thou ſhalt ſee greater things then theſe; God will diſtil the ſweet influences of his love into thy ſoul: He will raiſe thee up friends; he will bleſſe the oyl in the cruſe; and when that is

Gen. 18. 17

Joh. 1. 50

done, he will crown thee with an eternal enjoyment of himself; he will give thee Heaven, where thou shalt have as much contentment as thy soul can possibly thirst after.

FINIS.

THE INDEX.

Chap. 1. *The Introduction to the Text.* page 1, 2.

Chap. 2. *Containing the first proposition.* p. 5.

Chap. 3. *Containing the second proposition.* p. 14

Chap. 4. *Containing the third grand proposition,* viz. *a gracious spirit is a contented spirit.* p. 22.

The lesson of Contentment is hard to be learned.

It is of universal extent, Ib.

It concerns { *Rich men.* p. 24. / *Poor men.* p. 26.

Chap. 5. *Whether a Christian may not resent his condition with some sadnesse, and yet be content?* p. 32.

Whether a Christian may not lay open his grievances to God, and yet be content? p. 33.

What it is properly that Contentment doth exclude out of his Diocesse. p. 34.

Chap.

Chap. 6. *Shewing the nature of Contentment.* p.36.

Contentment is { *A divine thing.* p. 36. / *An intrinsecal thing.* p.38. / *An habitual thing.* p.39.

Chap. 7. *Containing the reasons which presse to holy Contentment.*

1. *Gods precept.* p.41.
2. *Gods promise.* p.42.
3. *Gods decree.* p.43.44.

Chap. 8. *The first Use shewing how a Christian may live comfortably in the midst of troubles.* p.49.

Chap. 9. Use 2. *A reproof to the discontented Christian.* p.52.

Chap. 10. Use 3. *A swasive to Contentment.* p. 58.

Several Apologies that discontent makes for it self, answered.

The first Apology answered. p. 59.
The second Apology answered p. 66.
The third Apology answered. p. 72.
The fourth Apology answered. p. 78.
The fifth Apology answered. p. 85.
The sixth Apology answered. p. 90.

The

The seventh Apology *answered.* p. 86, 93.
The eighth Apology *answered.* p. 96.
The ninth Apology *answered.* p. 99.
The tenth Apology *answered.* p. 108.
The eleventh Apology *answered.* p. 110.
The twelfth Apology *answered.* p. 114.

Chap. 11. *Divine arguments or Motives to Contentment.*
The first Argument, *The excellency of* Content-ment. p. 118, 119.
The second Argument. *A Christian hath that which may make him content.* p. 142.
The third Argument, *Else we confute our own prayers.* p. 147.
The fourth Argument, *By Contentment God comes to have his end, and Satan misseth of his end.* p. 147.
The fifth Argument, *Thus a Christian gets a victory over himself.* p. 150.
The sixth Argument, *All crosse providences work for our good.* p. 152.
The seventh Argument, *The evil of discontent.* p. 164

Whi

Which appears in 3 things, { *The ſordidneſſe.* pag. 165. / *The ſinfulneſſe.* p. 168. / *The ſimplicity.* p. 178.

The eighth Argument, The more a man hath, the leſſe he is ſatisfied. p. 183.

The ninth Argument, The brevity of life. p. 184

The tenth Argument, The evils that do attend a proſperous condition. p. 187.

The eleventh Argument, The examples of thoſe who have been eminent for contentation. p. 196.

The twelfth Argument, The preſent miſery and indigence of the godly, is all the hell he ſhall have. p. 203.

The thirteenth Argument, Not to have a contented mind is a great judgement. p. 205.

Chap. 12. *Three Cautions laid down.*

Though a Chriſtian ſhould be in every ſtate content, yet

he muſt not be content { 1. *In his natural eſtate.* p. 207. / 2. *Where God is diſhonoured.* p. 210. / 3. *With a little grace.* p. 214.

Chap.

Chap. 13. *The fourth* Use, *trial*; *Shewing the Characters of a contented spirit.*

1. A *contented spirit is a silent spirit.* pag. 222.
2. A *contented spirit is a cheerful spirit.* p. 223.
3. A *contented spirit is a thankful spirit.* p. 224.
4. *To a contented spirit nothing comes amisse.* p. 226.
5. A *contented spirit will not rid himself out of trouble by running himself into sin.* p. 230.

Chap. 14. Use 5. *Direction, Propounding several Rules for holy contentment.* p. 233.

1. Rule. *Advance faith.* p. 234.
2. Rule. *Breath after assurance,* p. 236.
3. Rule. *Get an humble spirit.* p. 239.
4. Rule. *Keep a clear conscience.* p. 241.
5. Rule. *Learn to deny your selves.* p. 244.
6. Rule. *Labour for an heavenly heart.* p. 247.
7. Rule. *Look not on the dark side of your condition, but the light-side.* p. 248.
8. Rule. *Consider in what a posture you stand here in the world.* p. 250.
9. Rule. *Let not your hopes depend upon extrinsecals.* p. 253.
10. Rule. *Often compare your condition.* p. 255.

11. Rule.

11. Rule. *Go not to bring your condition to your mind, but bring your mind to your condition.* pag. 263.
12. Rule. *Study the vanity of the creature.* p. 264
13. Rule. *Get phancy regulated.* p. 266.
14. Rule. *Consider how little will suffice nature.* p. 268.
15. Rule. *Beleeve the present condition best.* p. 269.
16. Rules *Do not too much indulge the flesh.* p. 271.
17. Rule. *Meditate much on the glory to be revealed.* p. 272.
18. Rule. *Be much in prayer.* p. 274.

Chap. 15. Use 6. *Comfort to the contented Christian.* p. 277.

FINIS.